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**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.**







# THE PATERNAL STATE IN FRANCE AND GERMANY

*By HENRY GAULLIEUR*



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"I do not suppose any reader of mine, or many persons in England at all, have much faith in *Fraternity, Equality, and the Revolutionary Millenniums* preached by the French prophets in this age; but there are many movements here, too, which tend inevitably in the like direction; and good men who would stand aghast at *Red Republic* and its adjuncts seem to me to be travelling at full speed towards that or a similar goal."

—CARLYLE, *Latter-Day Pamphlets*.



# CONTENTS

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CHAP.	PAGE
I. THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM AND THE COLONIAL FAILURE . . . . .	3
II. THE MEDLÆVAL COMMONWEALTH . . . . .	26
III. VERSAILLES . . . . .	49
IV. FRENCH DEMOCRACY . . . . .	67
V. BONAPARTISM . . . . .	103
VI. ROYAL RESURRECTION . . . . .	122
VII. FRENCH POPULISM . . . . .	131
VIII. OLD GERMANY . . . . .	152
IX. MODERN GERMANY . . . . .	181
CONCLUSION . . . . .	224



## INTRODUCTION

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It is almost an impertinence nowadays to remind a reader of past events; we travel so fast through life that old scenes, if remembered at all, are remembered only as it were by their picturesque features, by their peculiarly odd or extraordinary forms. Our allotted time is brief, and the past, with its cumbersome civilization, is ever receding from our view. Nevertheless, we all know that nothing happens by accident in human evolution; that there is a cause behind every phenomenon, be it a physical, a political, or a social one; and we know that there is a law connecting the cause with the effect recorded in past annals.

It has always struck me that the relations existing between some of the most important phenomena of French and German history, and their real, permanent causes, have never been sufficiently examined. If we all know, for instance, why the French nation overthrew its old absolute monarchy in 1793, we seldom ask ourselves why a still more absolute and despotic republic, and, later on, an absolute and despotic empire, were substituted for it. Again, we all know that the modern French and German people, borrowing parliamentary forms from England, are now using elective methods in constituting their leg-

## INTRODUCTION

islative assemblies ; but why these two states are struggling now with such diseases as socialism and militarism, the two modern products of their political activity, does not appear to me to have been sufficiently explained ; for the alleged causes of these diseases are not causes, but effects only.

I have tried to investigate here the causes of some of the results obtained in France and Germany from the transfer to the "state" of those individual rights and privileges which English-speaking nations—and particularly the American people—have so far considered inseparable from individual welfare, and consequently indispensable to national prosperity. Originally both France and Germany had the same feudal constitution as England ; but both France and Germany, by increasing gradually the authority of the "state," have obtained results totally different from those obtained in England. In both of the former countries the national government can be maintained by military force alone ; were this force removed, both Paris and Berlin would become again the scene of revolutionary efforts tending to overthrow legal and constitutional authority ; while in England, in the United States, or in Canada and Australia, nobody ever thinks of upsetting governments by revolutionary methods. Nevertheless, France, like the United States, is republican in form ; while Germany, like England, is a monarchy. But while the English monarchy and the American republic are enjoying the blessings of internal peace, the German monarchy and the French republic have both reached the same evil results and exhibit the same sores. Consequently, it is evident that these two states must be suffering from a common cause of disease ; while monarchical England and republican America must owe their present political health to a



## INTRODUCTION

common doctrine entirely independent from outward forms or appearances. The French and German doctrine of state paternalism, with all its consequences, seems to me to be the common cause of the French and German national ill-health ; to it alone, as we shall see by historical evidence, can we attribute not only most of all their past disasters, but also their present political misery.

A great object-lesson is contained in this past history ; it may be of some interest to American readers, by showing what results are obtained by a nation as soon as the state is invested with attributes which individuals alone should possess, and with an authority which they should never abdicate. I do not pretend that the facts presented in the following pages are new, nor do I claim to have described to the reader historical events not described before by French or German writers ; but in the course of my humble efforts to trace the real and true causes of these historical phenomena, I have had to study their various aspects and features ; and I became convinced that the latter were not merely external “accidents” due to “national ill-luck,” but that they were rather symptoms of a disease which could only be understood by a somewhat thorough investigation of the phenomena themselves.

There has been lately a tendency in the United States to attribute much curative power to the government in the treatment of social and political difficulties. For the last few years, many citizens animated by the best intentions have advocated the adoption of certain remedies—so-called populistic measures—by which, in their opinion, certain troubles would infallibly be removed. But these theories, aiming to put an end in the United States to the conflict between the interests of individu-

## INTRODUCTION

als or corporations and the interests of the community, are in reality very old. The proposed remedies have been tried and applied elsewhere, in small doses at first during past centuries, then in increased and enormous quantities, till the European continent has become more and more afflicted by their poisonous influence. The American remedy may bear a different label, and be of a different color and even different taste. But, however palatable it may be made by national ingenuity, chemical analysis proves it to be simply (in an apparently milder form) an old French and German remedy, the same old narcotic, destined to produce, first partial, then total individual lethargy; a drug extensively advertised and used by all continental governments of Europe on the plea of "national welfare." French and German civilizations, with their present decay, are the practical result of the doctrine prescribing the interference of the state for the removal of all objectionable features in national development.

However mild the American remedy may appear in comparison to its French and German prototype, the policy which prescribes its use is such a departure from the old and traditional diet of the English-speaking communities, and such an imitation of French and German national policies, that its adoption would practically amount to a destruction of all the old safeguards of Anglo-Saxon liberties. If the omnipotence of the state is proclaimed as a preventive and curative principle against national ills, if the doctrine is admitted that the interests of the people, the rights of the people, the welfare of the people, are supreme entities before which all individuals must bow down, it becomes clear that the protective barrier behind which individual activity thrives has ceased to exist. If the interests of the people re-

## INTRODUCTION

quire, for instance, the establishment of state monopolies in order to prevent individual encroachments, it becomes a secondary question whether the state is to control only telegraphs and telephones, or investigate private incomes, or manufacture tobacco and matches, as in France ; or provide alcohol, as in Switzerland ; or take possession of individual man, body and soul, as in modern Germany : and the solution of this question will then depend entirely upon the political weather, so to speak. If the doctrine of paternalism of the state is once recognized as the panacea for all political ills, it depends only upon accidental circumstances whether the tutelary protection, to be extended over the land to secure the much-coveted national welfare, shall end in a mild despotism or in a reign of terror. That the people is the source of all political power no American will deny ; but the question arises whether it will promote its welfare by abdicating rights which are the foundation of this power, to an abstract, ideal entity, whose practical activity cannot be exercised otherwise than through the channel of a bureaucratic oligarchy.

That the illusory benefits of a paternal state authority should fascinate highly intelligent men is not strange ; for as long as men will be men, every honest mind will feel indignation against greed, sordid ambition, and the unscrupulous advantages obtained by some over many ; and this feeling will be followed by a desire to find means for relieving suffering fellow-men from oppressive conditions. The idea is then naturally suggested that the state, being the delegate of the community, should be invested with sufficient authority to bring about such reforms as would promote a general happiness. This suggestion is almost as old as the world, and is prompted by a most philanthropic sentiment, the hatred of injus-

## INTRODUCTION

tice and wrong. The state becomes thus intrusted with a mission which very soon takes the practical form of an imperative despotism, and which must then be extended gradually to all branches of human activity; and in the attempt to realize divine justice on earth the state is expected to perform functions which no human functionaries—the only tools it possesses—can perform. Louis XIV., the French Republic, Napoleon, and the fourteen different kinds of governments established and removed by the French nation during the last hundred years were all invested with supreme authority, in virtue of the principle that the state alone could promote the public welfare and protect the public interests. This principle was established everywhere on the European continent, and it remains in force there to this day. Not wise enough to find other methods for removing objectionable and oppressive local monopolies or privileges, as the English community had done, the continental nations created the only monopoly against which there never is any redress at all—except revolution and armed resistance—the monopoly of the paternal state.

In investigating the history of these continental nations, one is reminded of the Oriental story, in which a number of children being unable to divide fairly among themselves a bag of walnuts, applied to an old sage of their town, well known for his wisdom: “How do you wish me to divide these walnuts among you?” said the sage; “shall I do it according to principles of divine or of human justice?”

“According to divine justice, of course,” answered the children, in chorus.

The old man then handed one walnut to one of the boys, two to his neighbor, and a dozen to the next one; then he gave the whole bag to another. The children



## INTRODUCTION

having all remonstrated against this extraordinary proceeding: "Did you not ask me," exclaimed the sage, "to divide your walnuts according to divine justice? And does not Providence always proceed in this manner when dividing her favors among mankind?"

This story is an old one; but in one sense men will always remain children—they expect divine justice on earth. In their vain attempts to obtain ideal results of this kind, the continental nations of Europe have signally failed to improve their condition by such means. What the state was expected to do always showed in the greatest contrast with its practical work. The ideal relief expected from the state, and the real results obtained from its representative organs, were at all times two diametrically opposed and widely different quantities. The gulf that separates more and more every day the overwhelming civilization of the English-speaking communities from the decaying polity of the European continent, takes its origin in the difference of attributes conferred by the people on the state; for while the power transferred by the individuals to the state was jealously restricted in all Anglo-Saxon communities, this power was constantly increased on the European continent. If the manager was often dismissed, and a new one appointed, the power conferred on him by the owners—the people—has hardly ever been altered; in fact, whenever such an alteration took place, it was never a restriction, but a new increase of authority which was effected by the change; as, for instance, when the state was authorized to abolish voluntary enlistment in the army, and substitute for it universal and compulsory service—universal and compulsory military serfdom of three years in barracks.

A few glimpses at the historical records of the two

## INTRODUCTION

principal nations of continental Europe, which in direct contradiction to Anglo-Saxon principles, have so obstinately continued to invest their government at all times with omnipotent and ideal functions, may awake perhaps in the minds of our populistic friends a suspicion that after all the state is not a divine goddess having direct access to the shrine of wisdom; but that the state must in the end always turn out to be practically a number of more or less intelligent human beings sitting in public buildings—generally on upholstered chairs—surrounded by a vast crowd of their own delegates, all working for wages, generally from nine or ten o'clock to sundown; all liable, like other men, to be wise or foolish, honest or dishonest, conscientious or not. Perhaps these short glimpses at the blessings secured by two great nations, through this incessant intervention of their governments in individual affairs, may remind an American reader that whatever objectionable features the old Anglo-Saxon principles of individual independence may have developed in America, it is certainly not to populistic methods borrowed from the European continent that he should apply for relief.

As I have said, the origin of all paternal governments is the same; they were and are all established in order to remove troubles arising from individual abuses, in order to promote the "welfare of the people." No "people" can get along without delegating power to a certain number of men, who then become the "state"; and practically, wherever the delegated power is too great, wherever, under the pretence of protecting the interests of the people, the state is allowed free scope for interference with individual affairs, political and moral disaster ensues. This at least is the invariable result of scientific evidence gathered from all human historical records.

## INTRODUCTION

I have tried to collect some of that evidence in the following pages ; they present—I am aware of it—a very incomplete and very imperfect relation, but my object was not to write a history of the political development of France and Germany ; my aim was simply to remind the reader of some facts which nobody has denied, but which in my opinion have been too much forgotten, and which were the direct result of the French and German doctrine. Consequently, I present these facts to the reader, not as a complete exposition of the political system of Europe, but merely as some of the results obtained by a political doctrine devised to foster the public weal in France and Germany. The collected evidence shows that under the influence of these theories “the people” loses very soon its political energy, that the individual men who are the component units of “the people” lose their dignity and self-respect, their former superiority, and that they become mere dummies in the hands of their paternal state. What fearful atrocities and cruelties are then committed on both sides, when the inevitable struggle takes place to recover from “the state” rights foolishly delegated by the members of the community ; to what a life of political misery, and to what condition of individual degradation and national weakness, the transfer of individual rights to the state condemns a nation—this is what the evidence shows too. For the present unhealthy condition of the European continent is not the result of an accident, no more than is the wonderful political expansion of the English-speaking peoples. Both are the logical outcome of the different manner in which the individuals composing the continental nations have lived for generations ; and their methods of life were determined by the manner in which they understood their own duties and the functions of the state.

## INTRODUCTION

The task of writing this book might certainly have been performed in a manner more satisfactory to the reader had the author been a native, instead of only an adopted citizen, of the United States. Educated in a French-speaking country, where he was admitted to the bar as a young man, and at the same time a graduate and a doctor of laws of German universities, he may have been facilitated in his work by his familiarity with European habits and peculiarities ; but if this early training was favorable to the proper understanding of European history, this advantage was perhaps more than offset by the necessity of treating this subject in the language of the reader. In this task he has been greatly assisted by Mr. George de Clyver Curtis, who kindly consented to revise the manuscript.



THE PATERNAL STATE IN FRANCE  
AND GERMANY



## CHAPTER I

### THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM AND THE COLONIAL FAILURE

THE close of our century presents an extraordinary spectacle of much importance to the next generation of English-speaking people—namely, that while the influence of the continental nations of Europe seems to become more and more restricted to their old territorial limits or to so-called “colonies,” occupied chiefly by soldiers and state officials, the spread of Anglo-Saxon civilization has surpassed all prevision.

Two hundred years ago, according to Macaulay, the population of England and her colonies was between five and six millions. That of France, as set forth in the tax-records of the year 1698, exceeded nineteen millions, and that of Germany was probably more than twenty-five millions. From that time to the present the French and the German peoples have each doubled in number, but the speakers of English, so early as the year 1831, had increased from five to thirty-five millions, and now number no fewer than one hundred and thirty-five million souls.

But it is not only in population that the English-speaking race leads all others. According to statistics, they are first in almost everything. A glance at Mr. Mulhall's work, *The Industries and Wealth of Nations*, shows this fact clearly enough. Whether it is in wealth,

## THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM

energy, steam-power, manufactures, commerce, books, or earnings and wages, it is the same story. First comes the United Kingdom, or the United States, then the British colonies, while the rear is brought up by the nations of the European continent.

We all know that individual liberty, reinforced by the discovery of steam and electricity, was the cause of this great progress. The mind of man—not the mountains, the valleys, or the sea—is the true cause of national prosperity; for the rich territories that were conquered and occupied long ago by Spain and by France remained useless to them. But from the little European island where the old feudal liberties of the nobles had been extended to the masses of the people, and had been preserved and adapted to modern wants, instead of being destroyed, as on the Continent, there issued armies of peaceable settlers to organize new communities in all parts of the globe. They own to-day more than one-half of the world's habitable area. All signs show that the rate at which the English-speaking nations have pushed forward during this century will not only continue, but even increase; and we may foresee that the unimportance of the continental states of Europe, outside of European boundaries, will become more and more marked.

A glimpse at the statistics of the present colonies of France, and at those which imperial Germany is so fond of quoting as an evidence of its growing importance, shows the almost ludicrous condition of their national expansion.

The French colonies, vast in extent, in spite of former losses, do not contain three hundred thousand Frenchmen; yet France began to colonize over three hundred years ago. Algeria, the most important colony of France, conquered about sixty-five years ago, situated at a day and

## AND THE COLONIAL FAILURE

a night's travel from French shores, contains, according to the last census, 233,939 Frenchmen. This includes the army and the functionaries whose duty it is to "administer" the country. According to French statistics, all the rest of the French colonies put together do not contain more French inhabitants than could be found in a second-rate town in the mother-country. Even at the time when France possessed the greater part of North America, the condition of state-ridden Canada and Louisiana, and the growing success of English rivals, showed that the prosperity of the New World must come through methods far different from hers.

If we turn to the German efforts at colonization, of which we have heard so much, thanks to German imperial buncombe during the last quarter of a century, the figures presented by government statistics become so extraordinary that they elicit a smile on the lips of the astonished reader. The prominent fact of these statistics is the paucity—not to say the absence—of German population in the colonies in question, and the vast army of officials. In many important districts the officials make up the bulk of the population reported as Germans, while in others it would appear that the white population, apart from the officials, is principally composed of British subjects. Take German Southwest Africa, for example. Here there are 586 civil officials, or constabulary, while the total of the German population is returned at 932. Of British subjects, however, there are, including the Capelanders, no fewer than 880. An important fact is that most of the German officials are single men, while the Cape settlers have numerous families. In German East Africa the situation is still worse. In the important district of Tanga, the European population returned in June, 1895, amounted only

## THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM

to 134, nearly all German state functionaries. The total exports of all German colonies never greatly exceeded three millions of dollars; the imports, of which the most important article was alcoholic liquors, till some recent legislation regulated its sale to the natives, never reached even that figure.

An idea of the insignificance of the French and German colonial work may be deduced from the fact that all the French and German inhabitants of these immense territories, conquered purely by force, could not fill a single city such as Melbourne or Cincinnati. Nevertheless, as we remarked, France has worked for three or four centuries at her colonial enterprises; and, although the German attempt to imitate the Spanish and the French colonial policy is of comparatively recent date, the fact that Germany has continued to pour its large surplus population into Anglo-Saxon countries, and that German emigration has persisted in refusing to settle under the national flag, shows that the German colonial collapse is not due to a mere accident.

It could not be otherwise. Anybody familiar with the needs of a prosperous new community, be it a far western American county, a Rhodesian settlement, or a young town in Australia, knows how indispensable to its life is complete freedom—free scope for all forms of activity, and independence from military and bureaucratic interference. But, according to the theory of the German State, such freedom is fatal to German “Bildung,” or civilization. Thus, even if Germany could succeed in diverting the flow of emigration to her own colonies, the settlers would very soon object to being governed from Berlin by imperial functionaries with no real devotion to the land. Local interests would always be conflicting with bureaucratic rule, for the interests of a military



## AND THE COLONIAL FAILURE

and civil garrison are not identified with those of settlers. Could any prosperous "new" community exist without perfect freedom of the press, of "meetings," of criticism of the government—liberties so necessary to those whose aim it is to convert wildernesses into civilized commonwealths? Any one who knows how indispensable to the very existence of the German state is the doctrine of government from above, by military obedience to bureaus and red-tape; and any one who has seen a new, rising community at work in a wild country, knows how antagonistic to each other the interests of the settlers and the interests of the mother-country would necessarily become.

A glance at the conditions regulating to-day all human activity on the continent of Europe shows how unfavorable such conditions are to the development and expansion of the people. The state, with its military and bureaucratic machinery, has gradually absorbed all the people's energy. The individual man has been stunted by constant pressure from above. Trimmed down to a fore-ordained state pattern, he has lost all those qualities which are indispensable in self-governing communities. Let us consider some of the prominent features of the continental doctrine.

To-day, hardly has the modern French "citizen" or the German "subject" opened his eyes in this world before the state appears, compelling the parents or the witnesses of this important event to report it to an official. This statute, enacted originally for purposes of philanthropy, would be quite unobjectionable if it had not soon degenerated into a selfish regulation for recording that one more has been added to the herd of future taxpayers and soldiers. The life of the new citizen or subject does not really belong to him, but to the state,

## THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM

for by another legal statute he is taught that he should be ready at all times to sacrifice his life, not for his own interests or those of his family, but for the political ambition of the government. He is told that he should "die for his country." Whether this word "country"\* represents true principles for which a man and a Christian should be willing to fight and die, or whether it stands merely for a fictitious ideal with no principles at all, is a matter of no consequence in the case of the citizen.

The child condemned by his ill luck to open his eyes on that part of the world must be a soldier at the disposal of the state. The doctrine is thus taught to the child that military triumphs are the loftiest expression of human power. Thus when the child grows up to be a man, crazed by national education, the only "unpatriotic" feature of war for him will be its cost, and the only moral question to solve will be whether his country is sure to win. Too often has all Europe been plunged into war simply because success seemed assured to the aggressor.

Now the child goes to school; also to church, where the paternal state, under the pretence of preaching Christian duties, maintains official state preachers under the supervision of its overseers—the *Ministre des Cultes*, or Minister of Public Worship, in France; the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, in Prussia. The Minister of Worship in France is generally at the same time Minister of Public Education, or of Justice and Fine Arts. The Prussian Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs is at the

\* The French *patrie* and the German *Vaterland*, for which there is no adequate expression in English, for the reason that the idea they represent is purely a continental conception.



## AND THE COLONIAL FAILURE

same time Minister of Medical Affairs and of Public Education.

Thus we see to-day in France forty thousand distributors, or preachers, of official religion, paid by the French state and standing under state supervision. Since the French state has stopped persecuting the Protestants, and since the Protestant religion has had the honor to be "recognized"—this is the official expression—by the state, Catholicism has ceased to be called the "state religion." The church remains, nevertheless, an institution of the state, saving souls officially, according to church regulations, which must be approved by state functionaries.

As soon as a child's education begins, the state interferes directly and indirectly, for it must stamp on the mind of its young slave a certain doctrine—namely, that without due recognition by the state all attempts at a liberal career are hopelessly surrounded with obstacles. Unless he has a private income, a young man must gain a diploma from the state or starve. All colleges, universities, chemical and physical laboratories, astronomical observatories, public libraries, technical schools, hospitals, and scientific collections are owned and controlled by the state in all continental countries of Europe. All the employés, all the professors in such institutions, are appointed and paid by the state, and are public officials under state supervision. The state has "Mind Overseers" as well as "Church Overseers," and they alone determine whether a man is useful or worthless.

Besides diplomas, titles, decorations, and distinctions of all sorts, the state has other means to influence national intelligence; nor is its absolute control of all institutions of learning the only power it possesses to govern minds. It accustoms the people to trust only to the

## THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM

judgment of the state for the selection of private advisers or assistants. No man can earn his bread in France or Germany in a liberal profession unless he has publicly been endorsed by the authorities. Without such recognition the people will not trust to merit alone. The faith in the wisdom of the authorities, disastrous though the result may be, is almost a religion among certain classes. Thus the French *bourgeois* will trust all his savings to the state, and invest all his fortune in government securities instead of private enterprises. This allows the French state, to borrow money at all times, and to increase its debt to a figure which could not be paid off by all the gold now circulating in the world—about six billion dollars—but at the same time it has created a habit of which Frenchmen always complain—that of refraining from all enterprises not supported by the state. While the English loan their money with much profit in all parts of the world, the French invest very little, even in their own colonies. They never would have loaned lately so much money to Russia if the state had not proclaimed so loudly its political partnership with the Russian government.

In all such measures, leading originally to the founding of a paternal state, what was intended by the people to be a safeguard became only a stumbling-block ; what was meant to be a philanthropic stimulant changed to a stupefying drug, a paralyzing weight ; what might have acted as a shield in the hands of guardian angels became a poisoned weapon in the hands of bureaucrats, impelled by ordinary human instincts and passions. As a matter of course, the worse the machine worked, and the more unsatisfactory its results, the more it had to be enlarged and strengthened, and the more complicated it grew.

## AND THE COLONIAL FAILURE

The system not only kills all inventive propensities, but acts disastrously in another direction. It fills the country with graduates of state institutions, theoretically fit for duties, but with no knowledge of practical work and with no practical sense.

There is not a state to-day on the European continent whose fate may not depend entirely on the result of one or two battles. In this respect none of them could exhibit the staying power recorded in past centuries, when the destiny of the nation could not be decided in one day by the genius or the mistakes of a single man—the commander-in-chief.

Not only has the modern European state transformed all able-bodied men into soldiers, but it has taken possession of them, body and soul, in many other ways. The citizen or subject shall not marry before the state has given him permission; for the state is paternal indeed, and in order to prevent young people from making a mistake, it prescribes delays, it requires the parents' consent up to a certain age. Should the man be an officer in the national army—and all well-educated young men of good families are generally officers—he is forbidden to marry as he pleases, for the girl must have a specified income or dowry in her own right, and she must prove before competent authorities that she owns a sufficient fortune to marry an officer. In Germany the officers of the regiment themselves, acting as delegates of the state, must refuse their consent if the girl's father makes his living by physical labor; and no German girl can marry a lieutenant if she has not an income of 2500 marks a year—about six hundred dollars—in her own right. Imagine what an encouragement this is to false declarations, and how many lovers will deposit borrowed securities as a formality, cheating thus the paternal state

## THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM

out of all its calculations. This rule exists in France, in Italy, and elsewhere, as well as in Germany.

Should the citizen or subject decide to sell or buy real estate, ubiquitous state bureaucracy looms up at once; and no such transfer is possible, unless it is made before a notary at a heavy expense, collected by the state. The recording of the deed alone is useful to the contracting parties, but the state has gradually made this service an excuse for imposing a heavy tax on all transfers of land. The only reason it can give for collecting such a percentage is that it always needs money.

When the citizen dies, the state interferes again; for where an income-tax exists, compelling the citizen to disclose every year an account of his fortune and his income or earnings, the state may examine the assets of the deceased. In some parts of Switzerland even—in the canton of Vaud—there is a law allowing state functionaries to invade the family home where the death has occurred, and to take an inventory, not only of the dead man's money, but even of his furniture. The French *bourgeois*, however, notwithstanding his traditional submissiveness to state despotism, has never become reconciled to such principles advocated by the continental demagogues, and he has till now sternly refused to allow any law to be passed levying an income-tax. He objects to disclosing his private fortune to the state, and, though willing to pay a high price for the satisfaction of being governed, he does not like to see functionaries poking their noses into his account-books. He knows, besides, what a premium on false declarations the state has established by this tax in all countries where it is levied. But when the citizen or subject is buried, escaping at last by natural laws from those of the paternal state, the control is not ended, for his estate cannot be divided as



the owner may have wished. The state knows better than the individual how to divide fairly, and it imposes by law the division among the children. Should the deceased have one child, he can dispose freely only of one-half of his fortune; if he has two, he can dispose of one-third; if he has three children or more, he can dispose only of one-fourth. This law varies very little on the Continent. Of course the state never helped the owner in saving his money; on the contrary, it levied the heaviest possible taxes on everything he owned—on his bread, on his meat, on his salt,\* on the oil burning in his lamp, on everything he consumed in order to live, on everything he inherited, and on every sale of land he made; but the state claims now the right to divide between his children, more equitably than a father, anything he may have left from the agents of the government.

The state has thus reduced this man to the simple rôle of an automaton, of a dummy living under constant tutelage, unfit to live elsewhere than under the shadow of that state whose constant assistance is necessary to him. Is it, then, surprising that the continental races have become unfit to colonize the world, and that their emigrants are unable to form independent, self-governing colonies?

The paternal duty of the continental state was the reason why such laws were enacted. In its anxiety to correct, amend, and improve individual activity, in wishing to prevent individual mistakes and foster family union, the paternal state, like the paternal church, has reached

\* In Italy poor people are not allowed to carry home a pail of sea-water, because they would evaporate it, make a little salt, and thus avoid buying government salt, which is very high-priced.

## THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM

the opposite results; for being only a human, bureaucratic affair—not a real representative of divine justice or wisdom on earth—it was necessarily controlled and managed by an oligarchy of agents.

But what have been the other disastrous results of tutelary civil administration in France? The principle is there laid down that the component parts of the people are unfit to regulate county or departmental affairs, the state alone possessing the necessary intelligence. The prefect and the sub-prefects are invested with a civil authority hardly equalled in Catholic countries and in spiritual affairs by the authority of a bishop. Both these functionaries, the prefect and the bishop, are sent from above; the one is imposed by the state, the other by the church. The French mind cannot understand self-government in politics, any more than it could understand Protestant Church democracy. At all times, under all régimes—and he has tried them all—the Frenchman must abdicate and delegate his rights of self-government to the state. The rural communes and departments—the counties—must be governed from the central authority in Paris, which, for the welfare of the people, sends out its omnipotent agents—the prefects—intrusted with despotic administrative powers. How this system works may be learned in Taine's well-known *Origins of Modern France*.

“The prefect,” says Taine, “is the conductor or overseer, by legal statute, of all administrative services. In his department he is the chief inquisitor of the republican faith, even in the recesses of home and private life. He is the leader of all acts and sentiments, orthodox or heretic, as the case may be, which can rightfully or wrongfully be imputed to the functionaries of the vast army used by the state to conquer human life; he is the

leader of the twenty different regiments composing this vast hierarchy; he is the overseer of the clergy in his department, of the judiciary, of the preventive and repressing police, of public education, of public charity, of direct and indirect taxation, of the recording officers, of the custom-house; he is the overseer of state functionaries for bridges and highways, for state forests, for state stud farms, for postal service and telegraph lines, for tobacco and other state monopolies. He is the overseer of all employés in institutes which should be private enterprises, such as the Sèvres porcelain state factory, the Gobelins tapestry state factory, the deaf and dumb asylums, and the asylums for the blind, which are all controlled and managed by the state. He is the overseer of all persons occupied in branch state factories where war or navy supplies are prepared, and of many other establishments which I will not mention. Observe that the indulgence or severity of such a man affects in France all the retailers of fermented beverages, 377,000 of them! That he can take away the bread and butter of 38,000 clergymen, of 45,000 retail dealers of tobacco, of 75,000 road-keepers, and of 120,000 male and female school-teachers; that directly or indirectly the ill-will or good-will of the prefects, since the new military law was enacted, affects all French adults between twenty and forty-five years of age; and, since the new school laws were passed, all the children between six and thirteen.”\*

The Minister of Worship, for instance, formally declares to the French parliament that on January 1, 1890, 300 clergymen have been deprived by the state of their official salary.† How the inquisitory French state pokes

\* Taine. *Le Régime Moderne*, p. 430.

† Anatole Leroy Beaulieu. *Revue des Deux Mondes*, March 1, 1890.

## THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM

its official tools into every French home can be seen by the declarations of Anatole Leroy Beaulieu, in his work, *The Republic and the Conservatives*, published in March, 1890, in the French *Revue des Deux Mondes*.

"I speak of what I have seen," says he ; "I speak of my own district ; it is an eastern department, formerly represented in the House by a radical member. Now, the conservatives having carried the election, the state has first tried to annul this election ; but it could not do it, as the majority was too large. The state has then revenged itself on the voters. The police have gone around in all the rural districts, investigating the conduct of the curates, of the rural constables, of the liquor and tobacco dealers. There was a state doctor of epidemics. He was a conservative. He was removed. The tax-collector, a man who had his home there, was sent west because he was not zealous enough. Every functionary who did not show his grief on the night of the election was threatened. There is no kind of worry that has not been tried ; they have persecuted even the very smallest people ; road-keepers, for instance, had their salary suspended. In one district nuns were distributing medical remedies to the poor ; the state has enjoined them from doing it, in order to worry the mayor of the town. The mortgage-recorder had an errand-boy, and this boy had been seen distributing circulars of the new candidate. The recorder received a letter from the prefect ordering him to discharge this boy within twenty-four hours."

We stop quoting more instances of this French administrative system, which is more or less in force all over the European continent. The recent debates in the French parliament have exposed the almost incredible despotism of the judiciary branch of the French state. Let us mention only one case.



The Swiss government—known since the Franco-German war for its socialistic tendencies—with characteristic bureaucratic carelessness, requests by telegraph the French government to arrest in Paris one Martouray, a Frenchman, whom it accuses of having sold certain forged bonds, on a specified day, to a banker in Lausanne. Without any inquiry the French government complies with the Swiss request. Martouray is found at once in Paris, thrown into jail, and kept there for days without being able to communicate with anybody; for no investigation of criminal charges is public anywhere on the European continent—it must be done under “secret criminal proceedings.” The unhappy man appeals in vain to the state, and asks to be allowed to summon at once some witnesses. The French Republican state does not even allow him to see an attorney, a friend, or a member of his family. Martouray, wild with despair, commits suicide in his cell. Hardly has he done this when the Swiss government finds out that it has made a mistake, that Martouray is not wanted at all; and the French authorities, upon investigation, find that the man had not been out of Paris for ten years, and that he had never been in Switzerland.

This incident led to a violent explosion in the French parliament on the 6th of April, 1897. The opposition took advantage of it to attack the government for its constant outrages against individual freedom, which happen almost daily under the law allowing such secret proceedings. With the usual virulence of language so characteristic of French parliaments, a certain M. Dutreix addressed the Minister of Justice, who sits in the House on the government bench.

“You are the man who killed Martouray!” he exclaims. The French Minister of Justice then rises be-

## THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM

fore the House. “No, M. Dutreix,” says he; “I have not killed Martouray; for the French government has immediately made a complaint to the Swiss government, after finding out the mistake. It is really unfair to accuse the government of having been the cause of this unhappy event of *which the government is entirely innocent.*”

Another member of the opposition rose and testified that the government refused to communicate the documents containing the request of the Swiss authorities. A violent scene followed, the opposition hurling its anathemas—evidently not without good reason this time—at the representatives of the state. Then the Speaker restored order, and the matter stopped there.

As a member of the British parliament, Sir Charles Dilke, recently said in a debate in the House of Commons on the repressive measures taken lately in India, the *lettres de cachet* of the old French monarchy still exist in France, and no improvement has been made in the judiciary criminal proceedings of the French state since the Bastille was destroyed. A French magistrate, in the French Republic, may keep an innocent person in prison for weeks and months, without allowing the accused person to communicate with anybody, not even an attorney. This statute is in force in continental republics as well as in continental monarchies; and, notwithstanding the disgraceful, ignoble disclosures made in the French courts of justice since Martouray’s case, when several other such cases were revealed, the French people—that so-called “liberty-loving nation,” that claims to have taught freedom to the world—keeps on its statute-books regulations similar to those of Oriental despots.

In Germany the system is still worse; for there no opposition dares to attack the government so violently dur-

ing a parliamentary debate. We shall have occasion later on to see what the civilization consists of that has been impressed on Germany by the German state machine.

The doctrine of the French state, with its unavoidable bureaucratic consequences, is well defined by Taine in the following sarcastic lines :\*

“The state has made its statutes for an ‘average Frenchman’—that is, for a fictitious citizen so restricted and reduced in size that nowhere can the statute fit real, living men. With its legislative pair of scissors, at one stroke it has cut out on one single pattern, in the same cloth, thirty-six thousand copies of the same coat; and this same coat must now fit every commune (county), whatever its natural size may be. The coat is too small for a city, too large for a village; in both cases it is not appropriate, and is condemned beforehand as a misfit; for it does not fit the large bodies nor the small ones. But as it was sent from Paris, we have had to put it on and live in it; and we have lived in it the best we could, every one in such a coat having no better one at hand. Hence, for every one in particular, very strange attitudes! And for general appearance of the mass, such wonderful effects as neither the governors nor the governed had ever expected to see!”

Thus the continental nations have gradually lost their political health, through being taught for generations to believe that the state, a fictitious entity, an abstract conception of the brain, can act, think, and provide much better than the individual man, merely by appointing functionaries of all sorts. Under the pretence that the state can think more judiciously than men of flesh and

## THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM

blood, the state must educate, teach, transport, and manufacture. It is supposed that its divine wisdom will enable it to perform such duties much better than private citizens, or firms whose own interests are nevertheless much more at stake than those of a vast anonymous, omnipotent corporation, always able to exact money and compel obedience. Then when the illusory results of the doctrine are found out, general discontent follows; but individual man, having lost all political business habits, finds himself not only unable to bear wrongs any longer, but also unable to reform, to redress, and to repair.

No particular form of government is responsible for the disastrous results of state paternalism. This is shown by the fact that little Switzerland, who tried to adopt the American constitution in 1848, has reached the same results as her more powerful neighbors. Her case may be of some interest to American readers, because, although Switzerland borrowed its federal constitution from the United States, yet, being accustomed for centuries to invest the state with omnipotent authority, she declined to adopt the judiciary safeguards existing in the United States, to limit this arbitrary power. As there is no supreme court in Switzerland, the Swiss state, like the French or Prussian state, constantly increasing its attributes under the pretence of fostering the public weal, always anxious to retain and increase its own authority, practically controls its much-governed population. This country is so unimportant to-day in the world's progress that nobody takes the trouble to investigate its present condition; nevertheless, revolutionary methods had to be resorted to during this century in almost every state of the Swiss confederacy. The last disturbance happened a few years ago in the canton of Tessin, where federal troops had to restore



## AND THE COLONIAL FAILURE

order, and where, during revolutionary riots, the chief executive was murdered by the mob. The reason why the little republic has now reached more or less the same condition as its neighbors, where socialism is a constant menace to civilization, may be seen in the following statement made by one of the leading Swiss dailies :

“ One of the great obstacles against which Swiss trade has to contend,” says the *Journal of Geneva* (July 10, 1897), “ is the constant mischief done by our cavilling state, by its pretensions, and the slowness with which it fulfils the duties which were intrusted by the people to the government. Yet the administration was established for the public benefit ; it was under this plea that the management of so many public interests was handed over to the state. But public administration here has thrown off all allegiance to the laws of trade ; to-day it has no other aim than to collect money ; for public administration is a branch of our state, and our state has two faces. It is a social organ, and consequently the servant of the people ; but it is also the supreme authority ; and those who represent the Swiss state are fatally led to give a predominating importance to authority and power. Formerly we had in Switzerland a very simple administration only, which was carried on at very little expense. . . . but we have now reached a point where the state, made too powerful, has lost its contact with the people, where it has forgotten why it was established, and where it works only to attain its own ends. The *Commercial Bulletin* has lately shown, for instance, how we were at the mercy of the state in all matters relating to claims against the custom-house ; and how, after a citizen has gone through all performances dictated by red-tape, he finds finally, at the end of the administrative ladder, for a judge his own adver-

## THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM

sary, the federal executive; in other words, fiscal authority itself. It is simply monstrous that there should be in Switzerland no neutral authority, no judiciary body, to decide those daily and constant quarrels between the state and the citizens. All the pretended improvements so much in vogue to-day in the federal government's bureaus have no other effect than to increase daily the power and the attributes of the administration. They want to 'nationalize' our railroads, and to transform them also, like everything else, into an instrument of taxation. Before following such a policy, it were wise for us to introduce in our state management reforms of which the public feels more and more the urgent need; it were wise to infuse into our public administration a new spirit of modesty and simplicity, to remind it that individual citizens have some rights; in one word, it were wise to make our state understand that in a well-organized democratic republic, the state should not be the master, but the servant, of the people."

The result of this despotism of the state has been the rapid increase of socialism in the Swiss Republic. Socialists, formerly unknown as a political factor, now play an important rôle in the country. The German-Swiss politicians having imported the nefarious German policy of increasing all the functions of the state, at a heavy expense to the classes who pay taxes, the results are the same as in the other state-ridden countries of the Continent.\*

\* The *Imperial German Gazette* of July 8, 1897, contains, for instance, the regulations lately issued by the German government for the sale of Professor Koch's new tuberculin, under which name the new specific will be sold by chemists and druggists, in phials containing one millilitre at 8.50 marks, and in phials containing

## AND THE COLONIAL FAILURE

The *Commercial Bulletin* of Geneva expressed this unsatisfactory condition of affairs as follows, in an editorial styled "Too Much Government": "We have in Switzerland a public administration before which any citizen who is obliged to apply to it feels that there is no hope in struggling, and that he is vanquished beforehand. He may have justice, right, and even the law on his side, but he knows that he is practically powerless, thanks to the red-tape, to administrative complications, to dilatory measures, and to 'interpretations' which block his road. With us in Switzerland, 'functionarism' and bureaucracy are in full bloom. The bureaucratic machine is fully organ-

five millilitres at 42.50 marks. And the tuberculin will be sold only to diplomaed medical men possessing a state certificate. Thus the German state, under the pretence of promoting the welfare of the people, regulates the price, the form of packing, and the use of a remedy. In Switzerland this German tendency of allowing the state to control all activity has taken a strong foothold, for the wise restrictions to federal omnipotence existing in the United States were left out when the form of the American constitution was adopted. The acts of the Swiss congress cannot be overruled by the Swiss supreme court—or "Federal Court," as it is called. This court can only overrule acts of cantonal, or "state," legislatures. The result is that a socialist majority in the Swiss congress could, as in France, abolish property, and tax only the rich; and a reactionary majority could abolish the liberty of the press, or restrict it, and pass a bill under which trial by jury would be abolished and socialists hanged for high treason. This is the condition of things to which the United States would be reduced if the American Populistic platform were adopted, abolishing the American supreme court, and creating an omnipotent state. Happily for Switzerland, the old mediæval statute of the *referendum*—the veto of acts of congress by the people—under which so many bad laws passed by the parliament are defeated, is still checking somewhat the paternal Swiss state; but this does not check the influence of Swiss bureaucracy and growing federal patronage.

ized; the functionary who stands on the lower step of the long administrative ladder, executes punctually the order coming from above; then he goes further; he 'scent' what his superior wishes, and he is most careful not to contradict him or to interfere with his intentions. Very well! But of what use, then, are all appeals to functionaries, and where is the citizen who can ever undertake a struggle when caught in the clutches of this machine?"

A French writer, M. Arsène Dumont, in his book, *Depopulation and Civilization*, expresses again a similar feeling. "Every administration," says he, "wishes to extend its functions, for the very reason that it exists. It wishes to have more employés, to be better paid, and to be more respected. The citizen becomes then an enemy who can never be bound and fettered enough; who must be governed, commanded, and overcome; who must be entwined in an inextricable network of red-tape, so as to feel worn out and defeated; so that when he is at last tired out by the struggle, justice may be granted him as a grace, and right as a real favor."

If one wishes to understand the causes which produced this condition on the Continent, one must look at the past history of France and Germany, not at the printed form of their present constitutions. Was not feudal, aristocratic England the mother of all the free English-speaking nations, whose control of civilization is already assured to-day, as we remarked before? And was not democratic France the hotbed of despotic authority, and the classical field of bloody revolutions during the last hundred years? Of what use are printed constitutions if the state controls the population, if the citizens have become political children or dummies unable to control



## AND THE COLONIAL FAILURE

and overrule their agents; how can the national estate thrive if the owner retires and goes to sleep during many years, after empowering the manager, the agent, to act as he pleases, to engage in foolish ventures, to spend all the cash, mortgage the property, and keep him practically under lock and key? What difference does it make if this estate is a republican sheep and cattle farm, or a monarchical vineyard?

What these different managers, these agents, have done for their owners, how they have ruined their political destinies, and how these owners have persistently refused to this day to redeem their political fortune, till they have become unfit to distinguish political prosperity from political misery and theatrical display, this is what continental history shows us.

That these national European estates are practically bankrupt, as the military mortgage and its enormous burdens show, all admit; that continental colonial activity in all parts of the world, represented by the ludicrous figure of three hundred and fifty thousand settlers after centuries of warfare, is nothing but military and chauvinistic display, the statistics show. But the connection between state paternalism and the political decadence of continental civilization is perhaps not enough appreciated. A few glimpses into the past may help us to understand this present inferiority of continental Europe in comparison with the gigantic strides of the English-speaking nations.

12

## CHAPTER II

### THE MEDIÆVAL COMMONWEALTH

DURING the Middle Ages this domain which the owners were going to abandon gradually to their agent, "the state," was still untilled, and in a wild condition. The owners themselves, the freemen, the descendants of the old Germanic invaders, were performing all the administrative, judiciary, and military work. On the ruins of the old Roman civilization, in all parts of Europe, there had sprung up a new political and social system, the same everywhere, almost unintelligible to us modern men who have forgotten its past usefulness, and who remember only the comparatively modern and very fatal consequences of monarchical usurpation. This new system, which extended over all Europe during eight centuries and more, was the old feudal compact; and what characterized this feudal organization was the fact that the freemen had not yet transferred their rights to any central authority. They exercised them themselves; for there was as yet no absolute monarchy, no omnipotent state.

Germanic kingship was originally a constitutional kingship, with very limited power; a mere elective presidency at first, which by degrees became hereditary; as in Germany, for instance, where the delegates of the nation

—the prince electors—continued during many centuries to elect the Germanic king, or Kaiser. In early times any freeman could be elected king; just as any native citizen of the United States can become president. Thus a very poor Swiss knight, one Hapsburg, became Emperor of Germany, having been duly elected to the office; truly a mediæval “dark horse.”

“He shall be born from free parents,” says the old Germanic law; “he must not be lame, but an able-bodied man”; for the king was the war chief. He could make no laws himself; that was the business of the mediæval parliament;\* among the Franks and the Longobards, for a long time, no law was valid unless it had been ratified by the people;† a statute which exists still in modern Switzerland, where any act of the national congress must be referred to the people whenever thirty thousand citizens sign a petition to that effect.

Nor could a freeman be judged by the king or his

\* These parliaments are designated in the contemporary records as *placita*, *conventus*, *concilia*, or *synodi*. The first documentary evidences we have of such congresses appear in the sixth century. Later, these assemblies received the name of Parliament in England, États Généraux in France, and Reichstag in Germany.

† The decisions which had to have a legal force had to be announced to the people at the place of assembly, and their consent obtained (*acclamatio*). The fact that this consent was obtained is especially mentioned in the edicts promulgating the laws. This appeal to the people to obtain its consent is called in the records “*Interrogatio populi*.” It is embodied in the charter, or *Capitularii*, of Charlemagne, who ruled over France and Germany. This co-operation of the people was even necessary among the Longobards for all decisions of the king sitting with the counts in judiciary matters. “*Sed nobis et nostris iudicibus atque Longobardis adstantibus iustum comparuit.*” (Zoepfl. *Deutsche Rechtsgeschichte*.) The publicity of trials ordered by modern law in constitutional countries is a relic of the old feudal safeguards.

agents ; he could be sentenced only on a verdict of his peers. Hence the old feudal institution of the jury, kept up in England with all the other mediæval safeguards against the omnipotence of the state, long after they had been suppressed by continental monarchs.

“The old English government,” says Macaulay, “was one of a class of limited monarchies which sprang up in western Europe during the Middle Ages, and which, notwithstanding many diversities, bore to one another a strong family likeness. That there should have been such a likeness is not strange. The countries in which these monarchies arose had been provinces of the same great empire, and had been overrun and conquered about the same time by tribes of the same rude and warlike nation. They were members of the same great coalition against Islam ; they were in communion with the same superb and ambitious church ; their polity naturally took the same form. They had institutions partly derived from imperial Rome, partly from old Germany. All had kings, and in all the kingly office became by degrees strictly hereditary. All had nobles bearing titles which had originally indicated military rank. The dignity of knighthood, the rules of heraldry, were common to all. All had richly endowed ecclesiastical establishments, municipal corporations enjoying large franchises, and senates whose consent was necessary to the validity of some public acts. . . . No English king has ever laid claim to the legislative power. The most violent and imperious Plantagenet never fancied himself competent to enact without the consent of his great council that a jury should consist of ten persons instead of twelve, that a widow’s part should be a fourth part instead of a third, that perjury should be a felony. . . . That the king could not impose taxes without the consent of Parliament is admit-



ted to have been from time immemorial a fundamental law."—*History of England*.

How the nation abdicated its rights, transferred them gradually to an absolute and central authority, the new "monarch," and how the rights of the absolute monarch were transferred to the modern absolute state, constitute all the political history of the European continent during the last four or five centuries. England, who kept the old feudal organization, and transformed it only by extending the rights of the freemen or Germanic conquerors to all men, has no paternal state. But on the Continent, where the rights of the freemen—the descendants of the old conquerors—were transferred to a central authority, state despotism ensued, and has subsisted under different forms to this day. In other words, the old feudal liberties were expanded in England, till every Englishman enjoyed all the guarantees of life and property owned by the mediæval lord; on the Continent they were contracted till they had all been gathered into the hands of one or a few men, the old freemen, the nobility, being gradually reduced to the condition of the former conquered people, the serfs, with no political rights at all.

Thus have the citizens of an American "county" inherited the rights and privileges of the mediæval "count"; and the American county organization, simply by the extension of the count's authority to the people, remains to this day a vestige of feudal organization more than ten centuries old; like the right of the Spanish grandee, descendant of the old Visigoths, to remain covered before the king, his peer and military leader.

As a matter of fact, our count or baron was rather a rough personage, whose animal spirits cropped out everywhere. His hand was a steel-gloved hand; the justice

he administered to all, without the help of learned attorneys, was generally of rather a summary nature—a sort of single-handed lynch law, regulated by the feudal statutes which governed all Europe, and were almost the same in England and in Spain, in France and in Germany.

Let the reader remember what kind of life mankind led in Europe after the death of Charlemagne, “the mediæval European president,” or “constitutional feudal king,” during whose reign two congresses used to assemble every year.\* The Saracens, coming from Africa bent on destroying Christendom, had conquered the greater part of Spain and half of modern France; they were plundering Sicily and the Italian shores; they had penetrated into Switzerland, and kept a foothold for almost a century near the Alps on the banks of the Rhone. The Magyars, or Hungarians, were making inroads into Germany and Italy; the Normans, the Scandinavian vikings, were desolating northern France, the English coasts, and landing freebooters in Italy and in Sicily. The waves of tempestuous humanity caused by the sinking of the Roman Empire, rolled to and fro without defined limits. No settled, permanent geographical boundaries existed for any nation; every land was at the mercy of any daring adventurer who could plunder and destroy at the head of a few thousand bold followers. Times were such that, according to the Spanish chronicles, “no knight or baron

\* Under Charlemagne there were regularly two congresses every year; a general congress, or real parliament, in spring, at the time of the Campus Martius, and a smaller assembly in autumn (*concilium seniorum et concilium praeceptorum*) to prepare the measures which had to be submitted to the next assembly. The oldest constitutional charter of Europe is the charter of the Frankish kingdom which Clotar II. was obliged to grant in 614. (Zoepfl. *Deutsche Rechtsgeschichte*.)

sleeps in his castle without keeping the horses saddled near the hall where he lies."

This situation produced after a while a new state of things. Europe was in such chaos after Charlemagne's death that, in the absence of a central authority strong enough to interfere successfully, the descendants of the old invaders, the petty rulers who were permanently settled on their estates, took it upon themselves to protect their own and their vassals' property. Every count, every baron, fought for himself and those who were "his people." Those towns, those villages, those valleys which were being devastated belonged to him and to the people who toiled for him and for themselves. Besides, the lords and the vassals, the descendants of the conquerors and the conquered, having lived side by side for a few generations and acquired common interests, had become friendly to each other. Thus in England the Norman barons and freemen, and the Saxon vassals and serfs, finally formed a league against the unconstitutional encroachments of the crown. At last, when a count or baron fell under the battle-axes of a common enemy, a general cry of sorrow and anguish went up from the people, and they mourned for him as their best protector and friend. If he returned victorious from the battle, they all praised his courage and his skill, even to exaggeration, and he was welcomed home with joy. For the peasant who knew by experience the dangers that threatened himself, his wife, his daughters, his cattle, his crop, and his humble straw-thatched home, and who, born from a less energetic Gallic or Latin race, now knew little enough about fighting, this peasant grew finally to consider his lord as his born protector. "Did not that man, with only a score of well-chosen hired followers, mount his good horse, ride day and night in his heavy

steel armor, and, undeterred by the number and terrific appearance of those foreign devils, charge lance in rest on their ugly pikes? Did he not, at a single stroke of that great sword, split the head of their leader—the villain that was going to burn our homes and kill us all? Did he not come back with his own head half broken, bleeding and bandaged, smiling as if this had been ‘all fun,’ and swear before God, the Holy Virgin, and the saints, that no foreign robber should ever get out of his county alive?”

Look at the manner in which he lives! In that great hall of the castle yonder, on the height overlooking the valley, he gathers at night his friends and faithful followers, and they sit around the massive oak table. In the gigantic fireplace, large enough to roast an ox whole—like those still to be seen in mediæval castles that have remained standing to this day—the glowing trunk of a tree is roasting a hundred-weight of meat. Venison is plentiful, for the boundless forests are still full of deer; plentiful too is the wine made yonder in the hill-side vineyards, and the beer—a sour beer brewed at home in a primitive way! There they all sit—much like the men of Homer—using their hunting-knives in place of forks, hungry as wolves after the day’s hunt. They drink out of the big horn—for glass is costly, and hardly known—which the page, old John’s or old Peter’s brightest boy admitted to serve here, carries around among the guests. The benches are of oak, hard to sit on, uncomfortable enough to later generations. On the walls, twelve or fifteen feet thick, hang no pictures, but massive trophies of famous hunts and weapons that have been well borne. Here hangs the shield which our lord’s grandfather—whom the old people in the village still remember—brought back from the Crusade; and



here the sword of that Hungarian warrior who would have killed Sir Charles when he was with his duke in Italy, if old Tom, who sits at table now, white-haired, half drunk and sleepy, had not rushed like a faithful vassal to his lord's rescue. Old Tom can eat and drink as much as he pleases now, for he is too old to look after the dogs and falcons. He was born in the village, and when still a boy he followed Sir Charles to the wars of King Louis. His sons are away now with our lord's eldest son, campaigning with the King against the Norman robbers who are besieging Paris again. Listen to this story of old Sir Hugh, who was in so many hard fights! They all talk of war and hunting, for they know nothing else. They empty many horns! All that they know of the world they have learned with their own eyes, or have been told by the old men. There sits the priest too, who lives near the chapel of the castle, a self-made man whose father was only a beggar. He is wonderfully educated, being able to read and write, all in Latin, while we can only sign with a cross or with our seal. There are no books here, except one massive prayer-book bound in thick leather, written by hand, with painted illustrations by the monks in the convent yonder across the mountain.

All these men wear buckskin and leather, and none of them, not even the count, owns a shirt. But the countess and her women, maids born in the valley, weave some linen and wool for themselves, and even fine tapestries which adorn the walls or are preserved in the fine carved chests of their room. None of these people have any knowledge of handkerchiefs; they do not know what sugar is, nor tea, nor coffee; nor have they ever seen a potato or an ear of Indian corn. Centuries will elapse before their descendants hear of tobacco. There

is no glass in the windows ; in cold weather the openings are closed with shutters and with skins. The beds are simply bags filled with feathers or wool. At night torches, tallow candles, or lamps filled with lard oil, throw their lurid and smoky light on the walls, leaving the hall in a gloomy semi-obscurity.

Thus lived the most privileged class of the mediæval community, with no intellectual occupation, no knowledge whatever of the universe nor of the shape of the world ; with no other refining influence than the Latin prayers of the monk and the occasional appearance of a minstrel who would perhaps recite some verses on the death of Roland, or the slaughter of a seven-headed dragon, or about a beautiful lady pining away in a prison for her favored knight. If the privileged class lived thus, generation after generation, imagine how the common people lived !

But still this is the bright side of mediæval life, for the improvement was great after the strong castle with its massive towers and battlements had been built. Sir Charles, for instance, bade all the vassals, under penalty of being hanged or beaten to death, to cart up mountains of building-stone and lime ; and since he made this pile of masonry, everything is already better in life. Before Sir Charles's time, when the foreign raiders invaded the valley, they killed the count, his hired fighting-men, and three-fourths of the population ; they outraged the girls and young women, tortured farmers who had concealed their corn, burned down every dwelling, and drove away all the horses, cattle, and sheep. It took half a century before the new people succeeded in reclaiming the land, draining the marshes again, and clearing the long-abandoned fields. When the next war came, the castle having been built by Sir Charles, we all took

refuge in it, penning the cattle and the horses near the well in the yard and under the walls. Then during the long siege the invaders tried in vain to storm the castle; everybody gave a helping hand to Sir Charles, and all those who could fight stood by him; with the result that his duke or his king at last came to the rescue, as by the feudal statute he was bound to do; and the raiders, for the most part, remained only to fatten the ground with their corpses.

Such was the condition of mediæval Europe for many centuries after the death of Charlemagne, when his European empire fell to pieces. "Not to be killed," says Stendhal, "and to own a good suit of leather in winter, was the greatest happiness for most people in the tenth century."

Gradually times grew better, under the influence of the great law which compels mankind to march forward, not backward, and which has driven us onward even from the cave-dwellings of the Stone Age. New towns and cities slowly grew up—new cities which owed their prosperity, not to the old prestige of the former Roman civilization, but to new mediæval wants and trading habits. The people's activity had not been crushed; certain points of mediæval Europe were becoming centres of trade, and then bargains began to be made between the lord and the town, satisfactory and useful to both, and of much importance to future freedom; for Count Charles, for instance, or Duke Louis, needing money to defend the province and raise a new company of archers, applied to his vassals in a certain town. Are they not under feudal obligation to pay him yearly so much of what they earn by trade? Could they not, since it is for their interest as well as his to protect the province, furnish him with ten or twenty times this

## THE MEDIÆVAL COMMONWEALTH

amount in one lump? And our gracious duke or count, well aware that he could not find and steal their well-hidden coin, scattered in a thousand secret places, willingly and “generously” offers to let the burghers import certain useful staples free of duty to him forever. Upon which the burghers, having met and discussed this grave question, appoint “Messire Peter” or “Messire John” to bargain with our gracious lord—with secret instructions to keep his eyes well open and to “get all he can.”

Thus commercial centres sprang up everywhere: Frankfort, Antwerp, Ghent, Cologne, Florence, Paris, Lyons, Bordeaux, and many new seaports. With comparative safety for life and merchandise, these centres of human industry soon threw their shining light far away into the country. Now, over all the Mediterranean Sea Venetian ships are sailing from the forlorn lagoons off the mainland where once a few fishermen and their families had taken refuge from the Huns. They import fine Eastern wares manufactured by the accursed infidels who have kept Jerusalem. We could not succeed in expelling them from the Holy Land, nor in cutting all their throats; let us trade with them now and make some money out of them. Genoese fishermen, good sailors too, follow this example, for it pays better to trade in the fine silkwares that all noble ladies have learned to admire than to catch fish. Even little Amalfi, near Naples, now a small seaport, reverted to primitive poverty, and a score of other fishermen's villages plunge into commercial and shipping activity. And the more money they make, the more rights they purchase from our noble lord, till finally they have bought all the rights that are worth purchasing.

In the provinces also, away from the growing cities, a change is taking place. Formerly we were all so poor,



duke and count, knight, abbot, monk, farmer, and peasant, that we lived like miserable people. Peace has improved matters ; but the world, although becoming wiser, has a great deal to learn yet. When crops are good we all have enough, eating much wheat, barley, and meat ; but when the crops are poor, one-quarter, or perhaps one-half, of the population goes hungry to bed every night ; for when food is abundant nobody can sell his surplus, the roads being bad and transportation long and perilous on account of thieves of all classes. Salt is scarce and high-priced for preserving meats, for it has to travel far on ox-carts, and there is a tax on it—the French *gabelle*. There was a time when even kings—the Merovingians, travelling around to preside at judiciary courts, regular circuit courts, in fact—had to go on ox-carts like nineteenth-century Africanders. But this mode of transportation is now happily reserved for merchandise, breadstuffs, and other bulky wares. Very possibly we may have to fight on the road for our purse and life, when we travel on horseback from one province to another in company with other merchants, or of pilgrims walking, staff in hand, to Italy or the Rhine. But even robbers have not an easy time at this period ; for should we overpower them we will deliver them to the count's officers, or to the next city constable ; and their limbs will be broken piecemeal in the market-square, and their heads stuck at the town-gate on an iron post made expressly for the purpose, as a warning to all that highway robbery, being a curse to traffic, must finally be stopped. We shall have to put up for centuries yet with epidemics, the “ black plague,” and the like, caused by filth, famine, and foul water—as in Florence, where two-thirds of the inhabitants died in one year ; but the people nevertheless are seeing the dawn of better days.

## THE MEDIÆVAL COMMONWEALTH

Bishops, abbots, and priests have during all these times fared better than anybody else. They were not exposed to cruel treatment, were well housed, well clothed, and well fed ; they needed no weapons for defence, their persons being sacred to all men, high and low. With all its vices and crimes, its hypocrisy, cruelty, and greed, the church was not always what it became in later centuries, a stumbling-block to progress, an instrument of demoralization whose deadly work only the Reformation could stop. In early times it had a civilizing influence on lords and vassals. Its ranks were open to all classes ; it offered a ray of hope for the poor and low-born, to whom success in life was becoming more difficult as Europe became more settled. Wealth was almost unknown ; the modern money power did not exist, and no man of low birth could offset a lord's authority by making money in business ; but a poor Saxon swine-herd, one Nicholas Breakspear, who had belonged to the despised race in England, held out his foot, while seated on the Papal throne, to the noble ambassadors of the King of England. Bishops and abbots often overruled barons, dukes, and kings.

Crude and rude as it was—almost monstrous as it seems to-day—this feudal system was really based on more solid foundations than we commonly think ; and the proof of it is that it lasted a thousand years. A system based on despotic brutality, be it legal or illegal, can never last long, for, like all wrongs, it carries in itself the seeds of its own destruction. But the feudal system, with its wild and primitive methods of regulating the rights and duties of man to man, its foundation of local home rule and individual rights for freemen, stood the wear and tear of centuries. All the Anglo-American liberties were transmitted through it ; all the state despotism of the continental monarchies of Europe came from



their suppression. Some of the noblest virtues of the human heart, devotion to duty, self-respect, bravery on the part of the leaders, patience, honesty, and faithfulness on the part of the masses, were the indispensable, unwritten conditions of the system. These conditions engraved in men's hearts ensured its long life. It gave rise to many abuses; nevertheless, at the time when it was introduced it was the most practical political system to apply, and it remained in force on the Continent as long as it was true to its principles of local home rule in opposition to the system of central state government. Under the pressure of natural laws it soon lost much of its harshness; serfdom, for instance, disappeared in England without ever having been abolished by statute.\*

Indeed, what use to a man are fifty thousand acres of land, be it the richest in France, unless the settlers co-operate with the owner in cultivating it? Is not the willing co-operation of labor the indispensable, tacit condition of prosperous landlordism in all parts of the world? And unless the tillers of the soil, be they tenants, serfs, or vassals, be protected from devastation and robbery, what crops will be raised—what wealth can the owner acquire? If some kind of mutual compromise between the conqueror and the population is not soon reached, how can the land be improved, roads made, and bridges built? How can villages and towns be enlarged, or even protected from annihilation? How can merchants import and export the staples, the wares necessary to all? How can manufacturers establish shops and train workmen to make good cloth or leather? Can the lord afford to sit behind the walls of his castle with a troop of hired soldiers, and have no other occupation than a raid on his

\* Macaulay. *History of England.*

neighbor's estate or the destruction of his own vassals' lives and property, which are the basis of his wealth? If the tiller of the soil cannot be induced by promises of some kind of fair treatment to clear new land, raise more horses and cattle, and feel that he himself will be benefited by his work, what are the prospects of the mediæval duke or baron? What are the prospects of their descendants, compelled by destiny to live in that district, just as their vassals, in some particular valley or hill-top of the world? If there were no more hope for the vassal than there is in a tread-mill, no possibility of improving his condition by economy and work, nothing but blank despair in his heart, would he not give up his struggle for existence, disappear, die out?

Yet the conquered, the vassals, are overwhelmingly in the majority. When, many centuries later, in 1792, the people at last recognized the fact that French nobility had for generations forgotten its mission, and had become a useless, ridiculous institution, the number of persons of noble birth in France was only 140,000,\* in a population of twenty millions. The Catholic clergy alone, who shared with the degenerate nobility those privileges under which the starving people groaned, numbered then 130,000. All England was conquered and divided up by only 60,000 Normans.

Mediæval nobility had arduous tasks to perform in order to exist, many duties to fulfil. Its local interests—just the opposite of modern bureaucracy—were linked with the material interests of the vassals, whose prosperity alone could insure the prosperity of their lords. What was called a privileged class, after the princes in Germany and the king in France had substituted cen-

\* Taine. *L'Ancien Régime*.

tralized Asiatic despotism for home rule, was not during the Middle Ages a class that could afford to be idle. These men had duties, and they knew it. They had constantly to strain every nerve to avoid disaster. Every county relied upon the count to defend the interests of the commonwealth. Like a western American sheriff, he with his own hired men did much useful and risky work. The mediæval baron never vanished, as did his French descendants in 1792, when his presence was needed. To this day the traces of the old bond between the lord and his people can be seen in many countries of Europe in the friendly but reverential relations still existing between their descendants.

In France, after the king had succeeded in reducing these formidable home-rulers to the rôle of a merely ornamental nobility, the degradation of the latter was a foregone conclusion. A privileged class fulfilling no duties, transformed into a group of vain and pretentious flunkies living at Versailles as fashionable beggars, could not exist long without being a curse to mankind. Hence the hatred and the fully deserved contempt that this perversion of the system has inspired. In Germany the greater vassals gradually transformed their dukedoms into independent kingdoms, reducing the elective emperor to a simple figurehead, and reducing the nobility, as in France, to the contemptible rôle which we shall see them play later on. Germanic kingship—to which the dignity of Emperor of the Romans had been added by the Pope—became finally a hereditary privilege of the Hapsburg family, a mere decorative office in the end, lasting to the time of Napoleon. The German princes, abolishing the old Germanic freemen's rights, became, like the French king, oriental despots. One of them, the Duke of Brandenburg, in 1701 converted his duke-

## THE MEDIÆVAL COMMONWEALTH

dom into the Kingdom of Prussia, and thus became the leading monarch of Germany. The people had lost all rights, even the old Germanic right to a trial by jury. And these oriental despots were the founders of the absolute monarchies whose omnipotence has been inherited by the modern continental "state."

In England the evolution of the system was in the other direction; the nobility checked the king's authority and gradually extended the conquerors' privileges to the people. Thus were insured the greatness of England and the political prosperity of all English-speaking countries. This present prosperity shows what great possibilities existed for Europe in the mediæval organization; for the American people, changing the hereditary system of the organization for an elective one, yet without abolishing any of the safeguards of freedom and order, or the system of home rule and local authority, have preserved what French and German monarchs have destroyed.

We all admit that the mediæval organization, the work of wild tribes not much more civilized than American Indians at the time when the great invasion of the Roman Empire took place, would by no means answer to the modern wants of a more refined community. It seems clear that the political worthlessness of the conquered people did not warrant an extension of political rights. When one thinks that all Sicily and Naples were conquered by twenty-five or thirty Norman knights, led by Robert Wiscard (Robert the Wise), who established himself firmly in the country, the conquest of Mexico by Cortes does not surprise us so much. The very fact that a long-civilized, densely populated country like Sicily and southern Italy should allow itself to be conquered and governed by two or three dozens of armed knights shows how little the conquered race was entitled to the man-



agement of public affairs. The invaders alone were free-men by law, and they alone deserved to have political rights; for, according to Germanic ideas, freedom entailed not only rights, but duties, and the conquered people could not perform those duties. This old Germanic superiority over the Latin race has reappeared somewhat, though in a less marked degree, in California, Texas, Florida, and New Mexico, where the invading American settlers could not easily associate the natives in the management of their county affairs. Nevertheless the mediæval serfs were by no means slaves like the American negroes; they could not be removed from the land, and they owned property. Gradually, the interests of the two classes being the same, serfdom practically disappeared long before the nobility ceased its political usefulness; for feudal home rule had created a joint interest between the lord and the vassal.

For this system, which was to be the foundation of Anglo-Saxon greatness, France and Germany substituted, as we said before, a truly Asiatic despotism, creating the paternal state of the European continent, with its subsequent misrule, corruption, and degradation. Under the plea that the king and his advisers could conduct public business for the people better than the people themselves, home rule was abolished. The judiciary authority was taken away from the count and transferred to the central government. In England and in America it was transferred to the people of the county. The first consequence in France and Germany was that individual liberty disappeared; for the agent of the state, the new judge sent by central authority, replaced the jury presided over by the count; and being invested with this judiciary authority, he could imprison and sentence a man without being responsible to anybody but his bureaucratic superior. Sub-

sequently even the formality of judiciary proceedings before imprisoning a man was omitted; the French and German kings simply issued orders of arrest, and the arrested man remained in jail without a trial, sometimes for many years.\* It is remarkable that within the last two years both Germany and France should have made use of the very same despotic authority. The German Emperor used it in arresting without a trial (or kidnapping) his master of ceremonies, Baron Kotze, and in keeping him in jail for three months without taking the trouble even of a judiciary formality. This was done because the man had been reported by court gossip as the author of certain anonymous letters. And the French Republic used it in sentencing the captain of artillery, Dreyfus, to imprisonment for life in a penal colony, without any public accusation, without any public trial, without allowing the man a chance to communicate with anybody but state functionaries. The man was said to be accused of having sold some documents of the French War Department to the German ambassador in Paris. He was arrested by the French state, brought before a committee of French officers supposed to represent a court-martial, and nobody was ever able to ascertain why these secret proceedings ended in degradation and penal servitude for life. There is not a man in France, except two or three state functionaries, who knows on what evidence Dreyfus is buried for life in a lonely island prison. With such proceedings in the modern German Empire and in the modern French Republic, certainly no less tyrannical than the old *lettres de cachet* which sent men to the

\*Everybody has heard of the "Man with the Iron Mask," the mysterious prisoner who died in the prison of the island of Hyères. He remained there all his life, and was never identified.



Bastille, does the European state pretend to protect national interests. Such things are impossible in an Anglo-American country, where the mediæval judicial authority of the count has been transferred to the people, the state having never succeeded in usurping the old feudal privileges.

In France, where originally the king had only a very small estate, no power, and no army except his personal followers, the absolute state did not exist before the sixteenth century; for the French parliaments were still powerful in the fourteenth century, as we see by their records. The feudal compact knew of no "national army"; in case of war the different vassals of the mediæval king were obliged to furnish their individual quotas; the king called on them for support as the president of the United States called on the different states of the Union during the war of secession. As the king could not tax the people, he could not maintain a "national army"; but he was allowed certain subsidies by parliament, in order to keep up a small force for his own executive duties. Hence the feudal statute still existing in England, under which the English navy is designated as "Her Majesty's Navy," and the feudal tradition which, although preventing the establishment of militarism, leaves to the Queen of England, or to the President in the United States, the disposal of a certain number of regular troops to protect the country's interests. The feudal compact always regulated the amount of the military contingent to be furnished to the king. One duke furnished 1000 or 500 fighting men, another perhaps 300, a count, 100; the common knight or freeman furnished sometimes only his own person, with horse and equipment. There was no national flag; the army did not fight under the king's banner; the archer, the pike-

man, the man-at-arms fought under the banner of his own duke or count, pretty much like the Greeks before Troy. But later on, when the French, the Spanish, the German kings absorbed all the feudal privileges and rights, the feudal compact being broken, there was no restraint, no limit, no legal barrier any more to their military ambition and power. The state imposed compulsory service, raised as many soldiers as the quarrelsome or ambitious policy of the government might require, created a large army and compelled everybody to pay for it. Then war could be undertaken to foster dynastic interests; and what was graver still, the state, keeping itself armed to the teeth, used its military force to coerce the people into political slavery, using bayonets and grape-shot in more modern times to maintain its usurped authority.

“It was impossible,” says Macaulay, “for the Tudors to carry oppression beyond a certain point; for they had no armed force and they were surrounded by an armed people. Their palace was guarded by a few domestics, whom the array of a single shire or of a single ward of London could with ease have overpowered. These haughty princes were, therefore, under a restraint stronger than any which mere law could impose—under a restraint which did not, indeed, prevent them sometimes from treating an individual in an arbitrary, and even in a barbarous, manner, but which effectually secured the nation against general and long oppression. They might be tyrants within the precincts of the court, but it was necessary for them to watch with constant anxiety the temper of the nation. . . . Thus, from the age of Henry III. to the age of Elizabeth, England grew and flourished under a polity which contained the germ of our present institutions, and which, though not exactly defined, or very exactly observed, was yet effectively pre-

vented from degenerating into despotism by the awe in which the governors stood of the spirit and strength of the governed. . . . The policy which the parliamentary assemblies of Europe ought to have adopted was to take their stand firmly on their constitutional right to give or withhold money, and resolutely to refuse funds for the support of armies, till ample securities had been provided against despotism. This wise policy was followed in our country alone; in the neighboring kingdoms great military establishments were formed, no new safeguards for public liberty were devised, and the consequence was that the old parliamentary institutions everywhere ceased to exist. . . . One after another the great national councils of the continental monarchies, councils once scarcely less proud and powerful than those which sat at Westminster, sank into utter insignificance. If they met, they met merely as our convocation now meets, to go through some venerable forms.”\*

The safeguards, indeed, had been originally the same on the Continent as in England.

When Louis XIV. ascended the throne, France had already converted the old feudal commonwealth into an Eastern monarchy. The state was to regulate everything, and with its superior intelligence and wisdom was to determine what was best for the interest of all. Whether it should attend only to the public highways and the public money, or whether it should decide in its superior wisdom what religion a Frenchman must have, what colleges and schools shall be supported by the nation, and of what national patriotism shall consist, depended now merely on the political weather. And when the French owners, reduced to abject misery by the folly

\* *History of England*, Vol. I., p. 20.

## THE MEDIÆVAL COMMONWEALTH

and extravagance of their managers, applied to revolutionary methods, dismissed their agents and appointed new ones, in 1793, French despotism became more intense yet; for as the paternal machine did not work to general satisfaction as expected, people believed that the only cause of trouble lay in its not being strong and heavy enough. Consequently the weight of the state must be more and more increased to secure the paternal results, till the nation was "flattened out," as in Germany, to the required shape. What becomes of individual energy, intelligence, and manhood, and what a spectacle these individuals present when all gathered together in one mass—the nation—after the "flattening process" of vertical pressure from the state has distorted all intellects, can be seen in the following extracts from French and German historical records.

## CHAPTER III

### VERSAILLES

THE feudal safeguards protecting individual rights thus gradually disappeared, and authority was taken away from "home-rulers" to be concentrated into the hands of one master—"the state."

In France, the "grande" nation exists now. What its condition is going to be we shall soon perceive.

In the first place, from all innumerable records of the time, gathered in France by the ton, contained in contemporary memoirs, chronicles, letters, treasury accounts, and official reports, one glaring fact appears in almost dazzling light as a characteristic feature of this French state; the fact that for all practical purposes of human existence, our great king, "le grand Roi," as his countrymen call him, might as well exchange thrones with the Sultan.

In his splendor, surrounded by his low-bowing courtiers and favorite "houris," he might as well represent the state in some Asiatic country where political doctrines would be the same as at Versailles; where peace and war, with all their consequences, are decided by one mind alone, in the seclusion of the royal harem, at the gaming or the dinner table, or perhaps during a stroll in the royal park. "I am the state!" — "*L'état c'est*



*moi !*”—a royal motto, which will be repeated by all subsequent French managers.

Versailles was now the residence of this head of the nation, a palace built at colossal expense to the people, but never big enough, to judge from the constant additions made to it. Thirty-six thousand masons, carpenters, and day laborers had been working constantly at it for several years.\*

Here also the French nobility is now congregated, the proud descendants of our mediæval dukes, counts, and barons; not steel-gloved any more, nor handling battle-axes, nor discussing in buckskin jackets and muddy riding-boots the rents of meadows with villagers and peasants. They are in a very different costume, and in a most extraordinary attitude for noble lords. With wigs and satin breeches, sky-blue or apple-green velvet coats with gold trimmings, embroidered silk waistcoats, lace ruffles covering their manly breasts, and tiny fancy court swords, our noble lords are standing with due reverence before the chief of state; not like the English barons at Runnymede; but revolving in their aristocratic minds quite different thoughts. For our king and master, having just finished his prayer, glances with dignified and proud countenance at our humble crowd, and then opening his royal mouth he calls one of us by name, everybody hearing the royal command with beating heart and panting breath. The King is going to bed

\* An idea of the pomp of “our beloved King and Master” can be formed from the fact that a successor, Louis XVI., who never passed in history for an extravagant man, kept in the stables at Versailles for his own use—the other members of the royal family and the great officers having other stables—1857 horses, 217 coaches, with 1458 “attendants of the stables,” whose livery coats alone cost yearly 500,000 livres (about \$500,000 in American money).

now, and the gentleman he has named shall hold the candle in the bedroom. Upon which every one of us retires, bowing very low, with anxious face, fearing that one's star is setting, with secret misgivings not unmingled with hopes.

"He had substituted 'ideal' favors," says the Duke of Saint Simon—one of our noble lords, but endowed by nature with much perspicacity and sense—"for real favors, of which he had not enough to bestow on all, thus raising jealousies by little preferences, in an artful manner. Nobody was more ingenious in inventing continually such little preferences and distinctions which engendered hopes. The castle of Marly was of much use to him in this respect; and the Trianon also, where we all could, it is true, make our court to him, but where the ladies had the honor to eat with him, and where they were selected at each meal. The candlestick also, which he commanded one of the courtiers to hold every evening at bed-time when his prayer was over, was very useful to him as a mark of distinction. The 'brevet jacket' was another one of these inventions. It was blue, lined and trimmed with red, magnificently embroidered with gold and a little silver in it. There were only a few of them, used by the king, his family, and the princes of royal blood. The most distinguished noblemen of the court used to beg the king for them, and it was a grace to get one. Until the death of the king, as soon as one of the jackets was disengaged there was a general scramble among the greatest lords to obtain it; and if a young nobleman received it, it was a surprising distinction. The different tricks of this kind which followed year after year, as the king was getting older, would be too numerous to explain."

Let us observe here also another extraordinary fact.

Our great king is not surrounded by a distinct minority of parasites and sycophants, a thing that might be expected, and that happened sometimes in England. No! All French nobility flocks to Versailles; no nobleman can afford to live year in year out on his estate. Such conduct would amount to suicide; his name, his person would be forgotten by the head of the state, and his prospects and the prospects of his children and relatives would be ruined. In the eyes of polished French society, a country squire or nobleman is now "nobody." A nobleman attending to his business interests, to his lands, his vineyards, his mills, remaining at home in contact, as formerly, with the country people, is simply considered as disloyal, as a sulker, whom the state might do well to watch, since he cares so little for the favors bestowed by its head.

Besides, by staying in Versailles and using tact, by keeping one's self posted every day on all underground rumors and gossip, by gaining the ear of *Madame*, the present favorite, through her father, husband, or brother, or even through her butler or maid, one's chances of success in life are almost assured. Should I succeed in making myself agreeable to *Madame* or *Monsieur* whom the king is distinguishing now by special favors, I could obtain the honorary command of a regiment, be made a decorative officer, an intendant, or inspector of something, with nothing to do and ten, fifteen, or even fifty thousand a year; or the king, hearing of my incomparable devotion and loyalty, might also reward me with a pension, or a present in hard cash.

Speaking of St. Simon's memoirs, Dussieux expresses himself as follows: "The political system is clearly shown in these pages; the king wants to remain the master of the nobility and to keep it under his thumb;

that is the reason why he gathers them up in Versailles, where he ruins them by extravagance and gambling ; he then gives them large incomes and court situations, pensions, and gifts. In order to understand this ‘exchange of independence for slavery,’ as St. Simon calls it, it is enough to peruse the immense ‘Collection of the King’s Bestowals’ written up by Bishop Dangeau, and kept in the collection of manuscripts of the National Library. *There is not a single noble family in France which does not live on the king’s money.*”

The state has “bought up” all the leading class of France, making it a privileged class of fashionable beggars, lackeys, and knaves, a class of men born free, with all the advantages of rank and education, but now stretching their hands like modern Castilian or Italian vagabonds ; standing like a crowd of their own footmen, with curved backbones, before this single man who represents “the state,” and who walks, cane in hand, in the sumptuous and crowded halls of his hundred-and-sixteen-million mansion ; ready to sell their soul and honor, even their wives, as did the Marquis de Montespan, “for a consideration” ; men who, in their fatuity, claim to be the standard-bearers of good taste and manners for the world ; the only “gentlemen” of France ; and whom their successors still exhibit to modern generations as everlasting models of refinement and culture ; whom academical France excuses on account of “the admirable influence the great king and his court exercised on French intellects and French ‘glory.’”

But this is not all. Our nobles have fallen into a shameful habit since they are all congregated at Versailles ; for, having nothing else to do now, and being unable to manifest their usefulness on earth, they have taken to gambling for high stakes ; and what is more serious, of



## VERSAILLES

cheating sometimes at cards in the magnificent halls of Versailles.

“Among all the profound evils inflicted on France by the rule of Cardinal Mazarin,” says the Duke of St. Simon, “gambling for high stakes and cheating were the ones to which he soon accustomed everybody, high and low. It was one of his best-means to ruin the noblemen whom he hated and despised; and also the French nation, of which he wished to annihilate all those who were great either by themselves or by their parchments. This work of destruction was continued ever since his death to this day, when the work is completed—a success which must surely cause soon the collapse and ruin of this kingdom.”

Prophetic Duke of St. Simon, who was writing these lines in 1750, thirty-nine years before the French Revolution!

“The Duke of Burgundy,” writes Madame de Sévigné, in one of her letters, “having no more money, asked the king to give him some; he gave him more than he needed, and told him not to mind losses, as it made no difference to such gentlemen as he, for if they lost they could always get more.”

“A few days later,” says Dangeau, “the king paid 12,000 pistoles (\$120,000) which his daughter the duchess had lost at cards, but he told her to stop making debts.”\* In 1702 the duke again lost heavy amounts, which the king paid.

Let us observe that Dangeau kept a diary of all his life at court, which invaluable document was afterwards printed and published.

On September 1, 1715, after a reign lasting over half a century, Louis “the Great” lay dead at Versailles, on

\* Dangeau. *Journal*, May 19.



his sumptuous bed. We have a water-color picture of this couch in the National Cabinet of Engravings; and during his reign no lady of the court passing through the royal bedroom ever walked by without making a humble reverence, according to etiquette, to the empty bedstead. There lay now the royal corpse; but before taking a last look at this head of the French state, let us hear what important and wonderful ceremonies accompanied every morning the rising of a French king. These ceremonies lasted till the French mob overturned the French state.

“In the morning,” says Taine, “at the appointed hour, the First Valet of the Bedroom awakens the king. Five categories of persons enter in their turn to pay their respects, and although the waiting-rooms are very vast, they are sometimes insufficient to hold the crowd of courtiers. First of all, the ‘familiar entry’ takes place. The ‘children of France’—the king’s children—princes and princesses of the blood; then the First Physician, the First Surgeon, and other useful persons. Then comes the ‘grand entry’; it is composed of the Grand Chamberlain,\* the Grand Master, and the Master of the Wardrobe, the First Lord of the Bedchamber, the Dukes of Orleans and Penthièvre, some other very favored noblemen, the maids of honor and lady-companions (*dames d’atour*) of the queen; and those of the king’s and queen’s sisters, or of other princesses; without counting the several barbers, tailors, and footmen of various sorts. In the meanwhile, on a gold plate, alcohol is poured over the hands of the king; then holy water is presented to him. He makes the sign of

\* He received from the state about eight hundred thousand livres a year (about eight hundred thousand dollars, according to modern valuations).

the cross, and pronounces his prayer. Then before all these ladies, noblemen, and others, he gets out of bed and puts on his slippers. The Grand Chamberlain and the First Lord of the Bedchamber present to him a gown. He puts it on and walks to the arm-chair where he is going to be dressed. At this moment the doors open again. A third wave of people enters. This is the 'brevet entry.' The lords who compose it have also the precious privilege of assisting at the ceremonial of 'the little bedtime'—*le petit coucher*; and at the same moment enter a number of servants, ordinary physicians and surgeons, intendants of *menus plaisirs*, or recreation, readers and other men, among these the *Porte Chaise d' Affaires*—bearer of the close-stool. None of the functions of the royal person can be accomplished without witness, indeed! At the moment when the officers of the wardrobe approach the king to dress him, the First Lord of the Bedchamber, being duly advised by an usher, comes to tell the king the names of the gentlemen who wait at the door. This is the 'fourth entry,' the so-called 'entry of the chamber,' larger than the preceding ones. Without counting the 'Cloak Carrier,' the 'Blunderbuss Carrier,' room decorators, and other servants, this entry comprises most of the great officers, the Grand Almoner, the Almoner of the Quarter, the leader of the chapel choir, the Master of the Oratoire, the captain and major of the body-guards, the colonel and the major of the French Guards, the colonel of the King's Own Regiment, the captain of the Hundred Swiss, the Master of the Hunt, the Master of the Wolf-hunt (*Grand Louvetier*), the Grand Prevost, the Grand Master and the Master of Ceremonies, the First Steward, the Master of the Bread, the foreign ambassadors, the ministers and state secretaries, the marshals of

France, and the most eminent persons of the nobility and clergy. The ushers keep the crowd in order, and, if need be, impose silence.

“The king then washes his hands, and begins to take off his night garments. Two pages take off his slippers. The Grand Master of the Wardrobe pulls off the right arm of the night-jacket; the First Valet of the Wardrobe pulls off the left arm. Both hand the night-jacket to an officer of the wardrobe, and a valet of the wardrobe brings the shirt enclosed in a white satin wrapper. This is now the most solemn moment, the culminating point of the ceremonial. The ‘fifth entry’ has been introduced, and in a few minutes, after the king has taken the shirt, all the eminent persons and officers who are still waiting in the anterooms will come in. There are a number of regulations about this shirt. The honor of presenting it is reserved to the ‘sons and grandsons of France’—(of the king)—but in their absence, to the princes of the blood, and to the royal bastards who have been legitimated; in their absence, to the Grand Chamberlain and to the First Lord of the Wardrobe. Let us observe that such an absence is seldom the case, because the royal princes are obliged to witness the ‘rising’ of the king, just as the royal princesses are obliged to witness the ‘rising’ of the queen. At last the shirt is brought. A valet of the wardrobe carries off the night-shirt. The First Valet of the Wardrobe and the First Valet of the Bedchamber hold the fresh shirt, one by the right arm, the other by the left arm; and during the operation two other valets of the bedchamber stretch out the king’s gown as a screen. The shirt is on, and the final dressing is now going to begin.”\*

\* Taine. *L'Ancien Régime*.

We spare the reader the rest of this ceremony of state, which takes place every morning. We observe only that the same ceremony must take place in the bedroom of the queen, but there the number of "entries" is reduced to three; only the princes of the blood, captains of the guards, and other great officers being admitted in the "grand entry" at the "moment of dressing" (*l'heure de la toilette*). The royal chemise is presented only by ladies, but with the same regulations of French etiquette.

"This," continues Taine, "is the *Lever du Roi*" (royal levee), "a piece in five acts. Certainly one cannot imagine anything more perfect to occupy the time of the nobility. A hundred noblemen of the highest rank have employed two hours in coming, waiting, entering, marching up, taking their positions, standing on their feet, and in keeping on their faces the easy and respectful expression which becomes such great actors; and when they get through with the king, they begin over again at the queen's apartments."

The amazing ceremonies of "all France," of that "wonderful" society so praised by Madame de Sévigné and her literary successors, may bring forth a smile upon modern lips; but there was a philosophy in them, a hidden meaning recognizable to-day in the continental courts of Europe, a symbolic expression that the state, and consequently its representative, was an idol, an allegorical condensation, so to speak, of all wisdom and authority on earth. Of what this idol is really made, of what chemical substances the allegorical compound turns out to be composed, and how different the imaginary state is from the real, this is what history shows.

These ulcers of the French body politic have been so often described that there is no necessity to remind the reader how numerous they were, and how deeply they



had eaten into the nation's sinews. Their existence was the natural consequence of an unhealthy political diet; and, as we shall see, similar corruption existed at the German courts. The Revolution was nothing else than a violent protest against abuses of state power; but while it removed these effects of a nefarious political doctrine, it did not alter the doctrine that caused them, nor was it possible to cure the moral degradation they had produced. The evil influence of the state was such that the French ideal of culture has been lowered ever since. The most striking phenomenon of this French display of *galanterie* and *savoir vivre* consists less in its manifestation than in the leniency with which French authors have judged it. Not only had the paternal state caused the ruin of the nation, but it had perverted its tastes by false education, by a substitution of false standards of excellence. That the ablest of all modern French writers, after himself describing the characteristic features of that society, should express himself as follows, can only be explained by the traditional peculiarities of the French mind.

He is speaking of how a lady of the old regime could express by her demeanor her full appreciation of social ranks. "A foreigner," says Taine, "remains stupefied when he sees how she circulates among so many awakened vanities, without ever hurting or being hurt. She knows how to express everything by her reverences, which vary by imperceptible shades from the moving of a single shoulder, which is almost an impertinence, to that noble and respectful bow which so few women know how to make, even at court. . . . Imagine, if possible, the degree of elegance and perfection to which good breeding had brought such people. I take one instance at random, a duel between two princes of the blood, the Count



of Artois and the Duke of Bourbon. The latter was the offended party, and the other was bound to offer him a meeting. As soon as his Grace the Count of Artois saw the Duke"—(Taine here quotes from Besenval, a witness of the duel)—"he sprang to the ground, and going straight to him, said, with a smile, 'Sir, the public asserts that we are looking for each other.' The Duke, taking off his hat, answered, 'Sir, I have come here to obey your orders.' 'I am here to obey yours,' retorted the Count of Artois, 'and I crave permission to return a moment to my coach.' He comes back with a sword, and the duel begins; but after awhile the bystanders separate them, and the seconds declare that honor is satisfied. 'It is not I who should have an opinion on the matter,' says the Count d'Artois; 'it is for his Grace the Duke of Bourbon to say what he wishes, for I am here to receive his orders.' 'Sir,' answers his Grace the Duke of Bourbon, lowering his sword, 'I am penetrated with gratitude for your kindness, and I shall never forget the honor you have done me.'

"Is it possible," Taine now remarks, "to have a truer and finer feeling for ranks, conditions, and circumstances, and can you surround a duel with more graces?"

This is, indeed, the typical French duel, with its ludicrous and stagey forms, of which "all France" is so fond to this day; but the grotesqueness of such a performance escapes French vision. The ablest writer of modern France sees in all this not a ridiculous display of nonsensical forms, but an exquisite manifestation of refinement. His eye is caught only by the pasteboard decorations of the French stage—that stage on which the greatest tragedies of Europe are soon to be played realistically. If such a mind as Taine's sees nothing here but good breeding and *savoir vivre*, how can the French

public have higher ideals of good manners and real dignity? One may remain awe-struck at the vision of a Roman amphitheatre, with its bleeding gladiators, its dying men and dying tigers, its purple and white robed spectators applauding the brave and howling at the cowards. One may call up in his mind the impressive effect of such a stage, with its bloody dramas, and remain silent; but Versailles' social *opéra-bouffe* and French Punch-and-Judy performances, with d'Artois and Bourbon as puppets, arouse quite another feeling—the feeling of a Shakespearian barbarian at a “celestial” performance in a Chinese theatre.

Among the actors of this Punch-and-Judy or Bourbon-d'Artois performance quoted by the eminent French writer as an instance of French *savoir vivre* the reader may notice the name of one of the bystanders, who related the duel in his memoirs—the Baron de Besenval. Poor Besenval, with his “fine appreciation of ranks and conditions,” so characteristic of contemporary French culture, is not destined to perform always on such a celestial stage. The world in which such men as d'Artois, Bourbon, and Besenval are performing graceful antics will soon become full of unheard-of realities and inharmonious yells, on which even a Besenval may have to gesticulate in another manner than according to Versailles etiquette. The Revolution has begun.

“You go to bed,” said Besenval to Louis XVI., “and you are not sure that you will not awake up poor next morning. That is frightful! One might as well be in Turkey.”

My noble lord, have we not been “in Turkey” for the last three hundred years? Have not your noble ancestors decided, many generations ago, that the only possible state for France was a Turkish state, with a sultan, with

pachas and harems? Have not your forefathers decided that "the state" alone should attend to the public welfare, and that the only profession becoming a French nobleman was the profession of lackey?

Poor Besenval! The Parisian mob does not approach him now, hat in hand, "with the honor to be," like his noble friend, the Duke of Bourbon, lowering his sword to d'Artois. He, Besenval, now the commander of Paris, sees a very different scene while sitting in the Champ de Mars, with insurrection raging all around and his men melting away. Now would be the time, Baron Besenval, Commander-in-Chief of Paris, to act like a man and charge like a soldier, sword in hand, to conquer the mob or die. The storm is raging, my lord, and Versailles stage properties have disappeared. Upon which Baron Besenval's decision is taken, as behooves such French noblemen, with the following result, as described by Carlyle: "Besenval has decamped under cloud of dusk amid a great affluence of people, 'who did not harm him.' He marches with faint-growing tread down the left bank of the Seine, all night, towards infinite space. Resummoned shall Besenval himself be for trial, for difficult acquittal. His king's troops, his 'royal Allemand,' are gone hence forever."

This, then, is the kind of man our French state has produced for a crisis, and will continue to produce. Were not some of the French leaders in 1870 of this kind? French *savoir vivre*, meaning, literally, the "knowledge of living," or the art of social intercourse, so characteristic of French nobility, as we are told, has ended in obliterating all manhood among the leading class. It culminates now in abandoning Paris to the mob, in travelling with due haste towards the frontier, and later in running away at Valmy, notwithstanding an

overwhelming force of German allies. When the French state-machine breaks down, as the German machine does also two or three years later, neither the French nor the German leading classes know what the word "duty" means. We witness, then, this extraordinary phenomenon, that of all these French noblemen not one dies, sword in hand, fighting a mob and attempting to re-establish order. When they die, they die like sheep under the butcher's knife, with the fortitude and stupidity of sheep. To die like a lion requires altogether another kind of courage, which has been eliminated from them by state training and state education. What an end for noblemen who have worn for centuries an aristocratic sword !

The fact is that these men were not men any more ; they had no ideal, no convictions, no religion in their hearts. Their very vices had not even the excuse of an exuberance of passion or of life. With their ridiculous wigs and their "celestial" etiquette, their stilted bucolic poetry, sonnets, and epigrams, their fashionable gossip, their extravagance combined with greed, their smooth tongues and lying hearts, their small brains, and their diminutive backbones bent under the weight of state authority, these men present the most contemptible spectacle that the world ever saw. They, not their kings, ruined France. They were the leaders of the people ; they had the power ; the despotism of the state was only the consequence of their moral weakness. They crouched like hounds before the whip of their master, the king. Had they never heard of an English King John brought to bay by his barons, of an English parliament, and of an English King Charles ? They were knaves and had behaved like knaves for centuries, opposing the world's progress almost everywhere the banner of their country



had been planted, and persecuting the Reformation in order to support a corrupt clergy and the Jesuits' rule. They and their state had been a curse to mankind from the night of St. Bartholomew, when they and their king assassinated the Huguenot leaders, to the day when they fled like cowards over the Rhine, to Coblenz and to England, abandoning their weak-minded king and his giddy queen to the mercy of French rowdyism.

These men deserve no pity. Not a single noble work, not a single heroic deed had they done, to be gratefully remembered by mankind. The influence of their political degradation, of their corruption and sham nobility, is felt to this day in France and will probably be felt forever, a curse to the nation. For they created the despotism of the French paternal state on the ruins of the old feudal commonwealth; the same commonwealth which was the basis of British freedom.

How had they and their state fulfilled their duties? Had not the population of France been decimated by hunger, misery, and war during more than two centuries? Slowly and gradually, under pretence of improving the administration, of removing individual, local, and provincial monopolies, of abolishing privileges that blocked the way of public welfare, the state absorbed the life-blood of the nation, till one-third of France's earnings disappeared every year to pay for bureaucratic rule, for state extravagance and state folly, to reward favorites and functionaries, and during the eighteenth century to defray the expenses of general corruption. Like a vulture, the state now feeds on the prostrate body of France. The dove that was believed to lead the way towards green pastures of national happiness turns out to be a gigantic buzzard, flapping its wings triumphantly over the dead body of the people. Because the feudal privileges of the



local lords were objectionable to the masses, the judiciary authority was transferred to the state ; therefore the state can now imprison or behead anybody it chooses, for the judges are selected, paid, and rewarded by the state, and become in the end mere tools of despotic tyranny. Whether the king or the king's ministers select them, or whether they are appointed by a republic which inherits all the powers of absolute monarchy, makes no difference in the final result. In both cases, as we shall now see, when the state substitutes a Phrygian cap for its crown, the result is the same : oriental despotism and oriental degradation.

“All over France,” writes La Bruyère in 1689, “you see wild animals, male and female, livid, sunburned, digging the soil with invincible obstinacy ; they have a voice in their throats and possess a human face ; and, indeed, they are men. They retire at night to dens, where they eat black bread, water, and roots. They spare other men the labor of ploughing, of planting, and of gathering crops ; and they should deserve not to lack that very bread which they produce.”

“But they lack bread,” says Taine, who quotes these lines of La Bruyère, “during the twenty-five following years, and they die by flocks. I estimate that in 1715 about one-third of them, six millions, died of misery and starvation. Thus for the first quarter of the eighteenth century, before the Revolution, the picture, far from being painted too strongly, is too weak ; and we shall now see that for more than half a century, up to the death of Louis XV., this picture is exact. Perhaps, instead of lessening we should increase the figure.”\*

Saint-Simon writes in 1725 that “in the midst of profu-

sion at Strasburg and Chantilly, the people in Normandy live on the herbs of the fields. The First King of Europe cannot be a great king if he rules only over beggars, and if his kingdom is transformed into a vast hospital for starving people, from whom in full peace everything is being taken away."

Has Europe not known since then, even to this hour, what "full peace" means; and have modern European states changed in any perceptible manner the old doctrine which allowed them in the past to impose intolerable burdens? A glance at the public debts of European states, and at the crushing burdens imposed in order to pay the yearly interest on the national mortgage, may answer this question. In France alone about fifteen hundred million francs a year—or, in round numbers, one-half of the money exacted yearly from the people—must now be applied to the interest on the public debt.

The population of France in 1698, according to the tax records, amounted to 19,094,146. During the regency, after the death of Louis XIV., it had shrunk to about sixteen millions, and during the following forty years it did not increase. The reports of some intendants, made even before 1698, stated that in certain provinces one-sixth, one-fifth, one-fourth, one-third, and sometimes one-half of the people had died.\*

\* *Correspondance des Controleurs.*

## CHAPTER IV

### FRENCH DEMOCRACY

Now revolution has come, with French republican-democratic doctrine, with proclamation of a new French motto, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity!" with sonorous, empty phrases, declaration of the rights of an ideal man, popular insanity, abolition of God and substitution by legal statute of the Goddess of Reason, abolition of Christ's evangelism, and substitution, by national vote, of the gospel of charlatanical Rousseau! All this has come.

There was no gospel in France; there will be one now—the gospel of hatred, first to all Royalists, to nobility and priests, then to Girondists and all moderate reformers; then to all democratic brethren who disagree with us; also to all men whose personal cleanliness of body and clothes is an insult to national ruffianism; to all those who mourn a murdered father, son, or brother; finally, to all nations who refuse to submit to being governed by French despotism and French barbarity; in fine, to all men wherever they may reside who, by their thoughts or beliefs, show a criminal independence of mind, or a mute disapproval of our new state gospel; with the result that for twenty years the European continent becomes a vast charnel-house, millions of men dying by bullet, bayonet, or sword; till enraged Europe, catching France

by the throat, puts her claws on the prostrate body and imposes peace for awhile. Upon which all France, so proud of having reformed mankind, abolishes the reform and hastens to recall with enthusiasm her beloved king and his incomparable nobility. This enthusiasm is marred only during one hundred days by an extraordinary performance of Bonaparte, who, returning suddenly from Elba, kicks our beloved king with lightning rapidity over the frontier, and pulls our ears for having acted like traitors and fools.

My learned friend, the greatest and most influential revolution which mankind ever saw was certainly not this one. Of all revolutions known and recorded in history, the only one whose work endured, whose work lives to this day after two thousand years, was a very different one; for its doctrine, in contradiction to all your revolutionary principles, consisted not in the conquest of new rights, but in the performance of old duties; a fact that nineteenth-century reformers seem all to forget. The Christian constitution, "all duties and no rights," to the contrary of yours, which is "all rights and no duties," is, strange to say, the only one which we never attempted to improve, the only one in Europe which men have not torn into shreds, even though they may have refused to live by it. A strange contrast to your constitutions devised by Sieyès and such other forgotten statesmen, whose dismal work we shall have to contemplate in the following pages.

What will the owners of this French estate do now? Has not France, under the influence of the great Versailles teachers of civilization, come long ago to the conclusion that life does not differ much from opéra-bouffe, or Punch-and-Judy shows, enlivened by French *savoir vivre* and *galanterie*, with Gobelins tapestry for back-

ground, with cardinals as leaders of the orchestra, Montespan, Pompadour, and such deities as national actresses? But after centuries of such performances, since they no longer suit the modern taste of Paris, let us have a change of play and of decorative scenery! Opéra-bouffe, Punch-and-Judy shows, exquisite though they were, have become impossible as a steady national diet. We shall now have dramas with new, appropriate stage properties suitable for new political theatricals and such popular evolution of French national ideals as our taste may select.

First of all, let us have a grand national firework to convince mankind of our incomparable "Fraternity." Let us have a "Feast of the Federation," where all Frenchmen, embracing each other, shall put on their Phrygian caps—that hideous head-gear—and where we will abolish human nature by unanimous vote; where old Versailles stage properties—escutcheons, emblazoneries, books of genealogy, and lawyers' bags—shall be burned, in the hope that French vanity can get along without them; a feast where cannons will boom, soldiers defile, and everybody shout "*Vive la Liberté!*" and "*Vive la Patrie!*" where all France will eat sugar-plums, and thus convince mankind of its devotion to veracity and truth. And at the same time let us begin to butcher men, women, and children, and construct not far from our "eighty-three departmental trees of liberty" the national-fraternity machine, a genuine French invention, the guillotine, around which our patriotic wives and sisters, all besprinkled with human blood, will dance the "Carmagnole" and sing the "Ça ira." Let us carry human heads on pikes in triumphal processions to convince the English and other barbarians that French civilization is a model for mankind. Let us have a



## FRENCH DEMOCRACY

“Tenth of August,” and put a red cap on our Royal Muttonhead; in which boisterous ceremonial, performed by the mob, all Paris assists. Among the bystanders a certain pale, thin, and black-haired young man of Italian extraction, a lieutenant of artillery, looking at this scene and perceiving red-capped Muttonhead, pronounces a shocking word in his native language, meaning “What a coward!” This young man’s name is Napoleon Bonaparte.

Let us proceed on that day to massacre the Swiss Guard, standing silent, without a commander, without orders, in stern and mournful attitude, there in the Garden of the Tuileries; not knowing how to act, but with one duty clear to them: that of standing by their post and not running away like French noblemen and French Besenvals; which duty they alone in Paris will certainly perform. Let us point our cannon at them with such bad aim “that the grape-shot comes mostly rattling over the roofs”; upon which the Swiss fire, by volley, by platoon; in rolling fire, clearing the Carrousel, stretching out not a few men, some of the fugitives rushing as far as St. Antoine before they stop, more than two miles away.

“Behold, the fire slackens not; nor does the Swiss rolling fire slacken from within. Nay, they clutched cannon, as we saw, and now from the other side they clutch three pieces more: alas, cannon without lintstock; nor will the steel and flint answer, though they try it. Had it chanced to answer! Patriot onlookers have their misgivings; one strangest patriot onlooker thinks that the Swiss, had they a commander, would beat. He is a man not unqualified to judge, the name of him Napoleon Bonaparte. . . . But what is this that with legislative insignia ventures through the hubbub and death-hail,

from the back entrance of the *manège*? Towards the Tuileries and Swiss: written order from his majesty to them to cease firing. . . . Patriotic Paris roars: Vengeance, Victory, or Death!"\*

The Swiss have ceased firing, ordered to do so by our beloved king. Heroic Paris can now proceed to victory, and show to the world what Paris heroism—so much praised by Victor Hugo, the typical Paris poet—really consists of.

"But," says Carlyle, "the most are butchered, even mangled. Fifty (some say fourscore) were marched as prisoners by National Guards to the Hôtel de Ville. The ferocious people bursts through on them in the Place de la Grève, massacres them to the last man. '*O, peuple!* envy of the universe!' *Peuple* in mad Gaelic effervescence!"

"Surely few things in the history of carnage are painfuller. What ineffaceable red streak flickering so sad in the memory is that of this poor column of red Swiss dispersing into blackness and death! Honor to you, brave men! Honorable pity through long times! Not martyrs were ye; and yet almost more. He was no king of yours, this Louis; and he forsook you like a king of shreds and patches. You were but sold to him for some poor sixpence a day! Yet would you work for your wages, keep your plighted word. The work was now to die, and you did it. Honor to you, O kinsmen; and may the old Germanic *Biederkeit* and *Tapferkeit* and Valor, which is *Worth* and *Truth*, be they Swiss, be they Saxon, fail in no age! No bastards; true born were these men; sons of the men of Sempach, of Murten, who knelt, but not to thee, O Burgundy!† Let the traveller, as he

\* Carlyle. *French Revolution*.

† At Murten the Swiss knelt down for prayer before the battle.

passes through Lucerne, turn aside to look a little at their monumental Lion; not for Thorwaldsen's sake alone!"

Was not this king with his Phrygian cap the natural consequence of other royal cowards who had lived under the adjoining roof of the Louvre? Did not one French king, a young Nero of this noble family, stand there at midnight, centuries ago—he one of the assassins of the St. Bartholomew massacre? And did he not, by the side of his Italian mother, shoot from a still existing window on defenceless Huguenots? Is there not, perhaps, a case of divine retribution here on this royal family?

And now, on the 2d of September, 1792, what is this bell of St.-Germain-l'Auxerrois set a-pealing for? The very bell—they say it is the identical metal—which on that other autumn Sunday had given the signal for that frightful butchery hatched up by a French king and his church! Is this church-bell forever destined to such calls? This time the swords, the pikes, and the daggers had not been blessed by priests, and the remembrance of what they were to do is fresher in the hearts of men, for the event took place only about a hundred years ago. Patriotic Paris stands at the gates of the prisons—there are seven in all—with sabres, axes, and pikes. Volunteer bailiffs enter, seize a victim and throw him suddenly into that howling sea before an improvised tribunal. A few questions are put. Swiftly this sudden jury decides: Royalist or not? "He sinks, hewn asunder. And another sinks, and another; and there forms itself a piled heap of corpses, and the kennels begin to run red. Fancy the yells of these men, their faces of sweat and blood; the crueller shrieks of these women, for there are women,

Charles the Bold mistook their act, ordered the attack, and was completely defeated.

too; and a fellow-mortal hurled naked into it all! Jour-gnaic de Saint-Méard has seen battle, has seen an effervescent 'Régiment du Roi' in mutiny; but the bravest heart may quail at this. . . . Man after man is cut down; the sabres need sharpening, the killers refresh themselves with wine-jugs. Onward and onward goes the butchery; the loud yells wearing down into bass growls. A sombre, shifting multitude looks on in dull approval or dull disapproval.

"Quick enough goes this jury court, and rigorous. The brave are not spared, nor the beautiful. Old M. de Montmorin, the minister's brother, was acquitted by the Tribunal of the Seventeenth and conducted back, elbowed by howling galleries, but is not acquitted here. Princesse de Lamballe has lain down in bed. 'Madam, you are to be removed to the Abbaye.' 'I do not wish to remove; I am well enough here.' 'There is a need of removing. She will arrange her dress a little, then!' Rude voices answer: 'You have not far to go!' She, too, is led to the Hell-Gate; a manifest Queen's friend. She shivers back at the sight of the bloody sabres, but there is no return. 'Onward!' That fair hind-head is cleft with the axe; the neck is severed. That fair body is cut into fragments, with indignities and obscene horrors of mustachioed 'Grands Lèvres' which human nature would fain find incredible, which shall be read in the original language only. She was beautiful, she was good, she had known no happiness. . . . Her head is fixed on a pike, paraded under the windows of the Temple, that one still more hated—Marie Antoinette—may see. . . . Note old M. de Sombreuil, who also had a daughter: 'My father is not an aristocrat; oh, good gentlemen, I will swear it, and testify it, and in all ways prove it; we are not, we hate, aristo-



crats !' 'Wilt thou drink aristocrats' blood ?' The man lifts blood (if universal rumor can be credited); the poor maiden does drink. 'This Sombreuil is innocent indeed !' " \*

"Six days and five nights of uninterrupted killing," says Taine; "among the slain two hundred and fifty clergymen, three of them bishops or archbishops."

Altogether one thousand and eighty-nine human beings, men and women, among them a negro, a few thieves, and a few old paupers. Let us hear some details.

"They are gay," says Taine, speaking of the butchers. "They dance around each new corpse, and they sing the 'Carmagnole.' They oblige people who live in the neighboring streets to get up in order 'to have some fun,' to take part in that 'picnic.' (Mortimer Ternaux, Vol. III., p. 131. *Procès des Septembriseurs. Résumé du Président*, Sicard. 91, 87. Granier de Cassagnac, Vol. III., pp. 197-200.) Benches have been brought for the 'citizens,' some others 'for the ladies.' The latter, more curious than the men, wish to contemplate the aristocrats who have already been killed; consequently lanterns are sent for, and one is put on each corpse. In the meanwhile the killing improves and its methods are perfected. At the Abbaye (Sicard, 91; Mathou de la Vareene, 150), one of the butchers complains 'that the aristocrats die too quickly, and that only the first men have the fun to strike them.' Consequently they shall now be struck only with the backs of the sabres, and then they will have to run between two lines of killers, as formerly soldiers between the switches. If the man is well known, great care is taken to make the torture last longer. At

\* Carlyle.



the prison of La Force the 'patriots' who come to take M. de Rulhières swear with fearful oaths that they will cut the head off any man who shall hit him with the point. They undress him first; then, during half an hour, they strike him naked with the backs of their sabres 'till the intestines protrude from the bloody shreds of flesh.' All the hideous monsters that are crawling in chains in the lowest depths of the human heart come out now at once from their den, not only hatred with its fangs, but also the baser instincts with their venom, and, like two packs of hounds meeting together, they rage now, especially on the women. Here ferocity combined with lechery introduces profanation in the torture, so that death is provoked by obscenity itself. In the case of *Princesse de Lamballe*, killed too quickly, the butchers cannot outrage much more than a corpse; but on the woman *Desrues*, and especially on the flower-girl of the *Palais Royal*, the butchers surpass *Nero* and the *Iroquois*. At the *Abbaye*, a soldier, whose name is *Damiens*, thrusts his sabre into the side of *Adjutant-General Lalen*, then plunges his hand into the opening, tears out the heart, and brings it to his mouth as if he were going to devour it. 'The blood,' writes an eye-witness, 'dripped from his mouth, making a kind of mustache.' At *La Force*, after they had cut *Princesse de Lamballe* in pieces, what the hair-dresser *Charlot* did—he who was carrying her head—I cannot write. I can only say that another man in the street of *St. Antoine* was carrying her heart and biting it. . . . They kill and they drink. Then they kill again and drink again. Weariness comes at last, and also drowsiness. One of them, a wheelwright, 'has killed seventeen of them for his share'; another one 'has worked so much at that job that the blade of his sabre is gone.' 'Since

## FRENCH DEMOCRACY

two hours,' says another, 'that I have been cutting flesh right and left, I feel more tired than if I had made mortar during two days.' Their first passion is worn out; now they kill like machines. Some sleep, stretched out on benches; others sit, drunk, near by. . . . 'Is there any more work?' says one of the butchers in a deserted prison-yard. 'If there is none,' answer two women, opening a door, 'we must find some!' (Mehee, 179.) Of course they can find some."\*

They kill now for the sake of killing. At Bicêtre, in the jail, are forty-three children of low birth, sent there to be reformed, all from seven to seventeen years of age. "Being young, they are hard to kill. Yonder in that corner," said one of the jailers, "they made a pile of the corpses. The next day, when they had to be buried, it was a dreadful sight! Some of them seemed to be asleep, like angels, but others were dreadfully mangled."

"In every street you hear the tramp of squads marching off suspicious people before the committee or to jail; around every jail there are crowds that have come to see 'the disaster'; at the Abbaye there is an auction of the clothes of the dead; you hear the rolling of wagons moving day and night to cart off 1300 corpses, and the songs of women beating time on naked bodies."†

"In the departments," says Taine, "such days as the 20th of June, the 10th of August, the 2nd of September, must be counted by hundreds. If there are epidemics and infectious diseases of the body, there are also those of the mind; and such is the revolutionary disease.

\* Taine. *Les Origines de la France Contemporaine*.

† Granier de Cassagnac, Vol. II., p. 258. Prudhomme, *Les Crimes de la Révolution*, Vol. III., p. 372. Mortimer Ternaux, Vol. III., p. 631. De Ferrière, Vol. III., p. 391. *Rétif de la Bretonne*.

It breaks out in all parts of the country, and every infected spot contributes to the infection of the others. In every city or town, the (Jacobin) club is an inflammatory centre which disorganizes the healthy members, and every demoralized centre sends forth its example like a miasma. . . . Thanks to this poison, usurpation, theft, and assassination shroud themselves in political philosophy; and the worst outrages against property and individuals become legitimate; for they are the acts of the legal sovereign (the people) entrusted with the public welfare."

Shall we speak of Lyons, of Marseilles, of Avignon, of Arles? Shall we mention in detail the deeds, almost incredible to English-speaking men, committed from now on in every French province? Let the reader consult French historians if he wants to hear more of this. Contemporary evidence in the shape of official reports, official investigations, statements of eye-witnesses, epistolary correspondence, and such other documents, fills all French libraries, not to mention modern French historical works. For us who do not pretend to write history, but simply to draw, if possible, some conclusions from well-established facts, another duty exists: the duty to point out to the reader the true causes of these fearful acts. Primarily, the cause lay in the abdication by individuals of all their rights into the hands of a tutelary state. The facts themselves nobody denies, painful as their statement may be to modern French ears and to French patriotic cant. We owe really a debt of gratitude to French historians, who, with due sincerity and due scientific love of veracity, have seldom hesitated to tell the truth about these proceedings. But if we agree with them on the facts, taking their own evidence as a basis for our meditations, we must look

deeper than they generally do to find the causes of such barbarous acts.

“The mob did it! Fearful work, we admit, but nothing more than mob work due to a fit of temporary insanity among the lowest classes of our society!” Such is the judgment of all past and present France.

My learned academical French friend, my wonderful and superficial French friend, raised and educated on Victor Hugo buncombe, let us here part company! Remain on your Olympic heights of French literature, but let me—and perhaps some other barbarian fellow-creatures—discern something more in all these tragedies. To begin with, let us observe the following fact—to your eyes rather unimportant—which, although established by your own veracity, has been related by you all as a trifling phenomenon, not worthy of comment; a simple piece of everyday news, uninteresting to French ears, but full of meaning and highly explanatory to us. Do not your own chronicles relate that “all Paris theatres, to the number of some twenty-three, were open and crowded every night during that week”? And that, as an English writer says, “while right arms here grew weary with slaying, right arms there were tweedledeeing on melodious catgut”? And did not all Paris go to sleep every night as if nothing were happening in town? Were not “five hundred thousand human individuals lying horizontal there every night as if nothing were amiss”? Where were your “men” during that awful week, when pieces of the naked body of poor, beautiful young Lamballe were carried on pikes around town, submitted to unspeakable “patriotic” obscenities; at that time when the woman Desrues and that poor Palais-Royal flower-girl were, with blood-curdling shrieks of agony, undergoing indescribable tortures? Where were your “young



men" at the time? Were they all in the blood-be-sprinkled procession, behind Charlot, the hair-dresser? Perhaps they were, but "all Paris"—*Tout Paris*, as the fashionable modern *Figaro* calls it—could not possibly all be there, nor be drinking and dancing around naked, mangled corpses with a lantern on each corpse and the intestines protruding from the pieces of flesh! Was there no rope in France to hang assassins? No gun-powder to shoot tigers? No clubs to brain mad dogs? Was the dazzling light of your "Ville Lumière" (the City of Light) really so blinding to your eyes that all these horrors seemed only a part of your usual political stage performances? And think of your national bard, your Victor Hugo, inventing such a name for Paris at the time when eye-witnesses—nay actors—of these scenes were still living around him in almost every street in Paris! Where were your citizens, your "men," young or old, your "people," your representatives of French culture, of *galanterie* and *savoir vivre*, of "delicate appreciation of social distinctions," and such other incomparable French virtues? . . . Asleep, in bed, *lying horizontally*, as Carlyle has it; or in theatres and cafés, as behooves "the most intellectual and refined nation of the world," talking literature, demi-monde gossip, and dress! Does it not dawn on you at last, my academical friend, that "all theatres open and crowded in Paris, to the number of twenty-three," and pieces of human bodies, male or female, carried in procession by patriotic "hair-dressers" at the point of a pike, are two totally different phenomena whose simultaneity may lead to a very plain conclusion? What conclusion does it lead to, if not to this, that your men were no "men," being either butchers or cowards, human hyenas or overdomesticated animals with only well-filled troughs as an



ideal in life? Does it not dawn on you at last that your Victor Hugo and other distributors of national incense and patriotic perfumery, with their admirable phrases and wonderful versifying powers, are very poor judges of real light, mistaking fireworks for volcanic eruptions, and moonshine for sunbeams? Twenty-six millions of much-governed people, admirably trained by their father "the state" and their mother "the church," represented as being the most interesting type of civilized humanity, and the most *galant* men on earth—these twenty-six millions of white men controlled during five years by Paris mobs under the leadership of "hair-dressers" of the Charlot variety, are a wonderful social phenomenon! Your fictitious ideal Frenchman in no way resembles the real twenty-six millions living in France at that time!

What if your wonderful Bossuet, fluent Massillon, incomparable Fénelon and Bourdaloue, with their admirable periods and magnificent phrases, had taught the French people nothing? If their classical sermons and beautiful church rhetoric had left no more lasting effect on French brains than a shower of rain? What if dignified Corneille, pompous Racine, and elegant Boileau, with their stupendous and eloquent alexandrines, what if all your classic bards and versifiers of smooth language had had no value whatever as national civilizers? What if the whole French nation, with its great kings and prime-minister cardinals, with its craving for a paternal state, with its central political goddess of the Phrygian cap, and its complete destruction of individual man, had taken the wrong road?

To all which questions academical France, trained in "official culture," shrugs its shoulders with a contemptuous smile. So, too, do modern *Tout Paris*, and all

the fashionable world, their smile being interrupted only during a few months, when in our own day Paris was ablaze, the Prussians in view, and the streets of the "Ville Lumière" running blood, while French patriots, slaughtering their countrymen, were performing again the old French drama.

Whither has "the state" led us? What are the practical results of our stereotyped education and centralized authority, and of Rousseau's patent medicine for all social ills, to sacrifice individual man on the "altar of the people"? Why, if the state owns all the power, and can alone decide whether this or that law agrees with the interests, with the will, of "the people," does it not stand to reason that "patriots" should first of all get control of that power in order to do good work? If the state imposes by law a certain belief on everybody—say the Catholic religion, for instance—because it is necessary for the people's good; and if I, an atheist, am convinced that that belief is contrary to sound morality and to the nation's interests, does it not stand to reason that I have a clear duty before me—the duty to get possession of state authority with my atheistic friends? Then we can hold the rudder in our own hands, and turn the ship of state from a course that we consider as leading to inevitable wreck. If we have really any interest in our country's welfare, the quicker we take possession of the rudder the better do we understand our citizens' duties. And are not those who oppose our "patriotic" intentions the natural enemies of our country, of "the people" at large? By such logical deductions, in a country enjoying the blessings of "paternal government," revolution is the unavoidable result. And as soon as the new party is in power, the "will of the people being supreme," it finds no barriers to the des-

potic authority of the state ; and, naturally, it uses this authority to establish its new doctrine, and to prevent its adversaries "from poisoning the people's minds." Hence, unavoidable laws and decrees against the liberty of the press, against liberties of all kinds ; laws against meetings, against free speech, against anybody who speaks unfavorably of the ruler ; hence the Bastille under Louis XIV., death by guillotine under the French Republic, exile under a Bonaparte, fine and imprisonment in Germany to-day ; and if this offence against "the state" happen during a political crisis, we have courts-martial, mob trials, and swift assassination. Can it be otherwise ?

In such a state, is not the honest and sincere conviction of a political party a sufficient excuse, even an absolute reason, for that party to destroy opposition ? If you and your friends believe sincerely that the establishment of imperial rule, for instance, is the only means to save the country, will you not work with all your power to overthrow the republic, and vice versa ? Do you not know by experience what power the state possesses as soon as it is supposed to represent "the people," whatever the name and title of the ruler or rulers may be ? Do you not know beforehand that as soon as you have succeeded in getting control of the rudder, your own government will be unhindered by individual, local, or provincial rights, by a supreme court, or by any other barriers ; and that it will be able to impose what you consider the salvation—and what may be the ruin—of your country ? Hence these kaleidoscopic changes of government in France, so wonderful to Anglo-Saxon eyes !

The reader knows, indeed, that Lafayette and the Girondists, who tried to substitute a constitutional monarchy for the absolute monarchy, were honest and sincere. But does he not know that Danton, Robespierre,

and Marat were just as sincere and honest? And in a country like France, where the "welfare of the people" depended on the state, had not every party the right to understand by the "welfare of the people" the application of its own doctrine and measures? The Girondists had admitted that "the will of the people was supreme"; but what was the "will of the people"? Could even elections under state control and pressure answer the question? The Left and the Right could not agree on it. Both understood by "public weal" totally different things, the attainment of which depended on measures diametrically opposed to each other. The result was foreordained. Unless one party retired from politics, the one had to destroy the other, and the graver the situation and the more serious the crisis, the stronger was the force employed to get control of "the state."

When the king disappeared, France's parliament inherited all his powers and became more despotic than the king. The name of the ruler was changed, the monarchy became a republic, but the ruler's authority remained intact. France was never less free than under that republic. That republic, with its lying device, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," was the master of every private citizen and the arbiter of his destinies. And the more intent the republic was on providing for the public weal, for the public safety, the more it persecuted, prosecuted, interfered, arrested, killed, and butchered.

The political short-sightedness of the continental nations, inherited by traditions and habits, has never allowed their liberal leaders to see that in an omnipotent state like France the French national device, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," was nothing but a lyric humbug. In a modern state like the present French Republic,



where, for instance, a petty judge can imprison and keep in jail anybody he pleases under secret proceedings, or where the state can make any law it pleases without subsequent hinderance in its application by statutory limits to its despotic power, such a device is as much out of place as it would be in modern imperial Germany. To deny this fact is to deny the history of France for the last hundred years. Has not the state there, in virtue of this omnipotence, changed its form fourteen times since the first revolution, simply because any party who possesses power enough can become "the state," and because there is no law in France limiting the powers of that state?

Thus, in 1793, liberty gains nothing. What events will happen afterwards depends merely on the scramble for power, the only question now being who will get hold of the rudder?

You can, indeed, proclaim equality if you wish, in the vain hope of establishing divine justice on earth. You can take the land from the rich. You can give it to the poor. But how will you prevent the rascals, the scoundrels, the vagabonds, and all the worthless men in France from plundering the farmer, the shopkeeper? See! Some men never work; they only eat, drink, and sleep a great deal, while others work and toil, eating, drinking, and sleeping very little. These men have a little sum of money saved by dint of hard work, ingenuity, and economy. Shocking! Is this equality? How, then, can we abolish nature and enforce equality? That is the question for our lyric French Republic; and the logical answer is that, unless we abolish French thrift, French industry, and French instincts of economy, equality will never be enforced, for some people will work and save their money and others will be only "patriots"—eat,



drink, sleep, steal, and kill—and no French or any other state can abolish this fact.

According to “patriotic” theory, there are evidently hidden traitors somewhere interfering with the motto of our omnipotent republic. We are cutting off heads now by the thousands, executioners complaining of overwork at Lyons, at Nantes, Bordeaux, and everywhere; but equality remains a fiction. Like other patent medicines similarly advertised with brush and paint-pot on great buildings, it does not seem to effect any cure. This failure becomes more and more evident. In short, we must either give up the attempt to abolish human nature, and then let inequality alone, or we must compel every man, woman, and child in France to stop work and cease saving money. This method is tried by plundering all corn-stores, establishing government prices for grain, substituting wagon-loads of paper money for gold and silver, and by all other means in our power; till finally our lethargic peasants, our shopkeepers, our laborers, who do not understand Rousseau and his *Social Contract*, but who know how to work and how to save a franc, begin to growl and be dissatisfied. Even plunder and the guillotine fail to overcome natural laws; the equality patent medicine has not cured us at all, producing simply nausea and the like among our people, which Bonaparte, when at last called in, will know how to stop by prescribing grape-shot.

Moreover, some of our patriots now that they are in power seem to retain some business habits, getting rich, fabulously rich, like Fouché, by confiscation, or by purchasing the property of noblemen and the church for a song; equality receding farther and farther into the dim background; rascals becoming wealthy, gentlemen becoming poor; and in the meanwhile our people eating

## FRENCH DEMOCRACY

bread mixed with straw, or the roots of the fields, in beautiful, starving equality!

Are not "the people's will" and "the people's weal" now the only rules we have for navigating the ship, individual man being merely a selfish animal to be domesticated by the state in its superhuman wisdom? Did not the public weal require the proscription of the Protestants and their Bible? Why should not now the public weal require the death of all good Catholics? Did not the public weal require in later years the proscription of all the Republicans, after the public weal had required the annihilation of all the Royalists and Imperialists? Where is the limit to the interpretation of the public weal? Where was the limit in Europe in 1848, where is it now? If you proscribe my interpretation, can I not make a revolution as well as you and proscribe you in my turn? If the state can do anything it considers right in 1860, can I not as a Paris *communard* in 1871 court-martial and shoot French archbishops and generals for being a curse to the nation? Have I not as much right as you to understand and interpret the "people's will"?

But, admitting that you succeed in stifling our voice—like Louis XIV. massacring the Protestants in the Cévennes, or the French Republic massacring the "suspects"—admitting that you finally succeed in establishing your system, by carrying the heads of all your opponents triumphantly on pikes, what means has the paternal state to maintain it? Is superhuman wisdom, is divine justice, is God presiding at your parliament? Are Providence and Christ inspiring your politicians? After all, is not your paternal state nothing but a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand, or a hundred thousand men, looking like all other men, without angels' wings, but with pockets in their breeches to put money in, with mouths to feed,

with passions, sympathies and antipathies, virtues and vices, strength and weakness? How are these men to be sure that no great mistake is made? Have we not already had such a paternal rule in the Pope and the Roman Church, with able cardinals, archbishops, bishops, and priests carefully devising what the public weal requires? With what results? What difference is there between their theory of authority and the theory of your wonderful paternal state machine? Are your agents all saints, or merely bureaucrats sitting on upholstered mahogany at certain hours of the day—with pauses for lunch? Are they wonderful Napoleonic organizers, conscientious Fredericks the Great, shrewd King Solomons, intelligent Bismarcks, or merely a number of state-drilled, short-sighted intellects, generally incapable of administering successfully with their own money a large brick-yard or a shoe-factory? By what channels will your regenerating, invigorating elixir of true wisdom—Liberty, Equality, Fraternity patent medicine—reach our thirsty lips? From whom will your paternal wisdom drip upon our poor state-ridden, much-governed community?

Have you ever considered, my Populistic American friend, how elastic is the doctrine of the public weal, how it can be wonderfully stretched in order to foster abuses and despotic authority; how under its cover, impermeable as it is to light and sunshine, all kinds of fermentation and decay are unavoidable processes of nature which no parliamentary laws can abolish? Have you ever considered how the doctrines of your European teachers have invariably ended in disastrous failures? Open the book of history and observe what happens in France!

The well-meaning, sincere redeemers of the popular weal, maintained now by popular suffrage, by pikes,

bayonets, and a liberal use of beheading machines, are sitting in "the people's" palace, regulating France and mankind. These men are not impractical theorists only; on the contrary, they have now become very practical indeed, seeing clearly that paternalism without a whip must be doomed as a failure, as a nonsensical lyric effusion of rhetorical Rousseau. And with more executive ability than one expected, these men have gone seriously to work organizing swiftly their ubiquitous and powerful bureaucracy. No political men ever worked harder; Danton, Robespierre and Marat, Roland and Mirabeau, and hundreds of assistants have toiled day and night, reading reports, examining statistics, appointing able men, discharging fools, and making contracts for the army that is smashing military Prussia and conquering the Rhine Provinces, now annexed to France by the treaty of Basel. Day and night they are investigating, reforming, correcting mistakes, and discovering truths. Did ever a secretary of the interior work harder than Roland, who sits with his wife, the new French Minerva, till day dawns over the Tuileries, writing orders, signing papers, examining documents, deciding practical measures, making marginal notes? Till, by dint of Herculean labor and ceaseless work, the paternal state has cleaned the Augean stables, and in every department, in every city, town, and parish, instead of old, unsatisfactory methods, a complete service has been established.

French republican bureaucracy swiftly extends its nets over the whole country. Besides the complete civil organization which was soon in working order, numerous supervisors, inspectors, commissioners, and the like depart daily from the central shrine of wisdom, carrying along with their instructions a tricolor scarf and other credentials, to peer with lynx-eyed, incorruptible sagacity



into every act of their subordinates. Do not three of these men appear one morning at General Lafayette's headquarters, summoning him at once to Paris to answer some questions and explain his apparent lack of zeal? Does not Lafayette become clear-sighted at last, and ride for life across the adjacent frontier, knowing perfectly well that his devoted army (which sends cavalry in pursuit) will respect those three citizens' authority? Has not victorious Dumouriez, after beating back the German armies at Valmy and elsewhere, and conquering Belgium and the Rhine, been obliged to ride off in a similar way, and disappear? Has not General Custine been similarly interviewed and obliged to depart for Paris, there to be swiftly beheaded by the state "for having been too slow"? If such is the fully recognized, well-established authority we possess, that even a victorious general has to submit to arrest in the midst of his republican soldiers, or run away followed by the bullets of his men, where is the civil officer who does not tremble under the inquisitive looks of the paternal government? The machine is superb, complete, and strong, handled by incorruptible men; for no money on earth will save your neck if you are lukewarm, stupid, or lazy; blood acting like oil in this instance to secure prompt and mathematical working of the machine.

But has the paternal government really succeeded in imposing its blessed rule on the land? We know, of course, that "the people" does not care a French penny for the machine, declaring it quite superfluous and unnecessary to protect "the people's" interests. This the people will do for itself, without civil-service machinery, courts, tribunals, and such ornamental contrivances, simply by cutting off the heads of all "bad citizens," and by promenading with these heads on patriotic pikes.



## FRENCH DEMOCRACY

“The people” will not exactly object to our paternal inspector or commissioner, will not stone him or lynch him; “the people” will hear his patriotic address, drink much wine to his health, and accompany him to the public square, where a few heads are to fall this day. But the paternal commissioner knows perfectly well that it is not safe, nor his business duty, to meddle with patriotic clubs. Our state machine may cut heads, straw, or hay, but it will not cut iron pikes. Here already is a crank in our machinery which refuses to work. When the paternal government has to deal with still more paternal “patriotism,” what can it do? Disobedience to the law, when caused by enthusiasm for the public weal, cannot be construed as criminal. Else what right have we, the government, to sit here in Paris? Then, too, may not these people find that even we are “not paternal enough,” mere lukewarm patriots or traitors, and that our mute disapproval of their interpretation of the public weal is a sufficient reason for cutting off our heads also? Here well-meaning, honest, incorruptible paternalism finds itself in a fearful quandary! Public approval of assassination, public endorsement of mob rule, is really not possible. To shut our eyes and let the mob have its way, that is bad enough! But to sing patriotic halleluias and march in processions, with the hearts of women and the heads of old men dripping blood on us, and openly to bless the butchers in the name of the state, that we cannot always do! And now the harmonious expression of the people, the patriotic howl, is heard over all France: “You traitors, weak-kneed republicans! Did you not promise to obey the people’s will? Were you not appointed to protect the people’s interests, to promote public welfare? And now you refuse to do it! Now you refuse to exterminate the

enemies of the nation, to crush those venomous snakes who cause our misery! Down with you! Off with your heads! Disappear, and let patriotic statesmen take charge of the state." Thus disappear the Girondists, brought to the guillotine by wagon-loads at a time; then their adversaries, Danton, Marat, Robespierre, Saint-Just, Fouquier Tinville himself, the attorney-general and chief provider for the guillotine, and thousands of others. Nobody knew how far the limit of the "public weal," the limit of paternalism, would be extended; it disappeared in the red horizon like infinite ocean. Danton accused the Girondists of being moderate, and they were marched off to death. He, in his turn, is accused by Robespierre of not going far enough in his interpretation of the public weal, and he dies. But now Robespierre himself has to stand before the Assembly. "Have I not been paternal, patriotic enough?" "No," is the answer; and he, too, has to die with his brother, with Saint-Just, and many others, sentenced by Fouquier Tinville. And Fouquier Tinville has to die! Tragic and paternal Kilkenny cats! To what will this lead us? At this rate, every man in France must disappear, patriotism becoming more and more exacting, till the state has become a pyramid of skulls, with the tricolor or the red flag on top and an inscription at the base—"Liberty, Equality, Fraternity!" Which does not happen, however, because even French human nature revolts at last, and all the nation acclaims a war god, despotic Bonaparte, and his well-handled artillery. "Long live the Emperor!"

But there is still another invincible obstacle. Our admirable patriotic and bureaucratic machine, with its indefatigable statesmen, its incorruptible tricolor commissioners, devoted agents and inspectors, hard-working

clerks and police captains, cannot, as we saw, work on patriotic ruffianism. All it could do was to exercise its despotic authority on better classes of men unable to fight us with our own fire. No theoretical speculation about this, but hard, practical, bloody facts, the severing of our many paternal necks ! And now another unforeseen event takes place, for our machine, excellent as we made it, suddenly proves to be very weak in one spot. A fissure appears in the boiler itself, the result of natural laws, growing wider and wider every day—an ominous crack, prognosticating explosion and ruin. Some of our shrewdest, most patriotic, and intelligent representatives, with their tricolor scarf and other republican insignia, have suddenly shown remarkable symptoms. Most of them, though selected from patriotic clubs, from the people, are making money fast, travelling about with demi-monde and harems in great style, in six-horse carriages, abusing their power in order to satisfy their greed, their passions, and their vices. What is to be done ?

“Most of these men,” says Taine, “find that show adds to their authority. Drawn in six-horse carriages, surrounded with guards, sitting in the company of adventurers, ‘fast’ women, and pretorians, they impress all imaginations with the idea of their power ; and the more extravagant they are, the more the people bends its neck before them.”

The Goths and the Vandals never plundered as much as the representatives of French liberty. After a few years the country lies prostrate at the feet of its government ; one-half of the nation is composed of robbers, and the other half is being robbed. The state bank-notes—“the people’s money”—have become so worthless that ten thousand francs—two thousand dollars—will hardly pay a cab-fare. Gold and silver disappear,

hidden in secret places, in cellars, drawers, and under the ground. Starvation is general, and the regulation of corn sales and prices by the government is perfectly useless. The old question has to be met: "How can equality be enforced when some will work and others will not?" In short, France has become a paternal hell on earth, quite the reverse of a paternal paradise!

As there is now nothing more to plunder within its boundaries, the republican state plunders Belgium, Italy, Holland, Switzerland, and the German lands on the Rhine. According to careful estimates the plunder reaches a total of two billion francs in the three years from 1795 to 1798, stolen by the French state from the inhabitants of foreign lands. Of this amount three hundred and five millions are represented by uncoined gold and silver ware of all kinds and by jewelry, and six hundred and fifty-five millions by cash payments exacted by the French government from public or private victims. The pawnshops alone of Rome, Venice, Bologna, Milan, Modena, and Ravenna yielded fifty-six millions in diamonds, gold and silver ware.\* All this to foster the "public weal" in France, and also for the good of the victims themselves, who learn by these methods the value of French lyrical effusions. Did not these victims live in ignorance of our national device, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," of the "rights of man," and such other humbugs? Now we have enlightened them; we have taught them social ideals!

In all France not a man rises sword in hand, swearing to God that he will stop these butcheries or die in the attempt, like a man; not one—except some peasants in the Vendée, who, under the leadership of a few stupid

\* Taine. *French Revolution*.



noblemen, want to re-establish a king on the old Versailles pattern! Not a single Frenchman rises calling on his countrymen to stand by him and subdue mob rule! Not one! Even Lafayette decamped, galloping away from his own army, unable to command obedience from his soldiers in such an emergency; his head full of impracticabilities, sentimentalities, and other empty notions.

"It could not be done!" exclaim my learned academical friends; "army too much infected with Jacobinic doctrines, not confident enough in its leaders! French nation too much blinded by demagogues."

Indeed! And was it not done, my friends! Did not one young man do it? An Italian—not a Frenchman—I admit, for his blood was not French, nor his name, nor even his language! But did not one man do it? When asked if he would undertake this "job," did he not reflect a few hours, examine the situation, and say "Yes"? With the help of some artillery judiciously placed, and a very few men who had discovered that this leader at least was not a mere parrot, did he not, I say, take your "people" by the throat, knock some of them into atoms with lightning rapidity, and send the rest howling with fear to their dens, thus finishing your French Revolution? And when this foreign *condottiere*, as your best historian calls him, had applied his whip to patriotic backs and at one stroke, with very little loss of life, had cowed your Paris mob, was not the end immediately reached? Sixty thousand heads or more rolling into sawdust-filled baskets and not a dozen men rising in France to hang a single assassin—is that your ideal of paternal civilization?

Let us take a last look at what takes place in Victor Hugo's "Ville Lumière" (City of Light)—or "Gay



Paris," as modern fashion has it—before the curtain falls.

In the early stages of this revolution, when citizens are embracing each other on the Champ de Mars, when everybody, the king included, takes the oath of allegiance to the new French device, does the nation recognize at last that "our great paternal kings" are nothing but a sad result of our national corruption? Not at all! The mob acclaims the king and declares that he is "the father of the people"; for how could the French people live without a paternal ruler? Royalty is immensely popular; parliament being now full of "lyric effusions," and becoming daily more wonderfully grotesque with its political opéra-bouffe performances, of which Rousseau's pupils are the impresarios. For instance, Anacharsis Clootz, entering the august hall where our parliament sits, with the human race—(*le genre humain*)—at his heels: "Swedes, Spaniards, Polacks, Turks, Chaldeans, Greeks, Dwellers in Mesopotamia, behold them all! They have come to claim place in the grand federation, having an undoubted interest in it."

"Our ambassador titles," says the fervid Clootz, 'are not written on parchment, but on the living hearts of all men. These whiskered Polacks, long-flowing turbaned Ishmaelites, astrological Chaldeans, who stand so mute here, let them plead with you, august senators, more eloquently than eloquence could. They are the mute representatives of their tongue-tied, befettered, heavy-laden nations, who from out of that dark bewilderedment gaze wistful, amazed, towards you and this your bright light of a French federation; bright particular day-star, the herald of the universal day.' . . . From bench and gallery comes 'repeated applause'; for what

august senator but is flattered even by the very shadow of human species depending upon him? From President Sieyès, who presides this remarkable fortnight, in spite of his small voice, there comes eloquent though shrill reply. Anacharsis and the foreigners' committee shall have place at the federation, on the condition of telling their respective peoples what they see there. In the mean time we invite them 'to the honor of the sitting' (*honneur de la séance*). A long, flowing Turk, for rejoinder, bows with Eastern solemnity and utters inarticulate sounds, but, owing to his imperfect knowledge of the French dialect, his words are like spilt water. The thought he had in him remains conjectural to this day."\*

Now the blessing of Heaven has been secured on our new tricolor flag by a simple and ingenious process: God's blessing "descending gently on us through two hundred shaven-crowned individuals in snow-white albs with tricolor girdles, arranged on the steps of fatherland's altar, and at their head for spokesman souls' overseer Talleyrand-Périgord. These shall act as miraculous thunder rods. O ye deep, azure heavens, and thou green, all-nursing earth! . . . Is there not a miracle: that some French mortal should—we say not have believed—but pretended to imagine he believed that Talleyrand and two hundred pieces of calico could do it?"†

The tricolor flag flutters now on all public buildings, though considered by some as not being red enough. Let us have another one now—the red flag, whoever may bless it, official overseer of souls Talleyrand-Périgord or Satan—and let us proclaim that it shall be the only true flag of the City of Light, the flag of the Paris

\* Carlyle. *French Revolution*.

† *Idem*.

Commune ! This flag appeared in tempestuous meetings before the City Hall, where Lafayette, as president, succeeds in having it removed for a time.

Honest and able workers, Roland, Carnot, and others, who toil day and night, are becoming the enemies of the people. Danton himself, with his thundering voice, although wading in blood, is losing his popularity. But one human being among these twenty-six millions of French people has risen at last—not a Frenchman, but a French girl, who departs silently from Caen, in Normandy, leaving to her father a few lines of indifferent excuse. She gets admission the next day at Marat's house, Rue de l'École de Médecine, 44, and plunges her knife in his heart. A stern, handsome girl, this Charlotte Corday, of quiet, well-bred demeanor, with no French lyrism in her soul, but old Norman, Shakespearian fire, who dies for what she considers a duty. Marat was sick and worn out. He left for all fortune the equivalent of twenty-five cents in American money and a few squalid pieces of furniture. Some of these paternal statesmen, it seems, are in earnest, and work only for the public weal, not for themselves. Thus died Marat while writing for Charlotte Corday the names of fifteen citizens of Caen who should be beheaded.

The dismal tumbrils continue to deliver their "loads" day after day. Fouquier Tinville has augmented the number of the machines, to work faster. All these people die like sheep, with the resignation of sheep, cowards in action but brave on the scaffold ; too timorous to fight, but steady enough before inevitable death. Could not this kind of courage be transformed into manhood ? No. These men are not heroes, only state-ridden, domesticated animals, with no wild rage in their hearts for injustice and crime. Camille Desmoulins

dies ; then his widow, with eighteen others, among whom is Herbert's widow, too ; and all the Herbertists who plundered churches and adored Reason ; then Danton and all the Dantonists. History calls this period "The Terror." Fouquier Tinville chooses from the twelve prisons what he calls "batches" — *fournées* — a score or more at a time ; finally threescore and more at a batch. Thouret, the former president of the Constituent Assembly, who made the closing speech, saying that it "had fulfilled its mission" ; old Malesherbes, who defended Louis XVI., his relatives, his daughters ; d'Espremeuil, the sister of King Louis — even Simon, the shoemaker, to whom "the people" had confided the education of the king's son, the child-martyr, they all die ; also Lavoisier, the celebrated chemist, who begged a fortnight more of life to finish some scientific experiments, and was told for answer that "the republic did not need such." And under such circumstances Paris is having in all its main streets "a fraternal supper," each citizen bringing forth to the open air, on a common table, whatever eatables he can find without infringing upon the law, for we have now a law of "maximum" regulating appetites.

And now the City of Light witnesses another scene. Robespierre, incarnate figure of our paternal state, presides over the convention, which passes a law establishing "the existence of the Supreme Being," and likewise the "immortality of the soul." All Reason-worshippers have been beheaded. Robespierre, in sky-blue coat, issues proudly from the convention hall with a bouquet of flowers and wheat-ears in his hand, the convention following him. With his own hands he applies a torch to hideous statues of Atheism and Anarchy, made of pasteboard steeped in turpentine, which burn rapidly, ac-



according to well-known natural laws ; and there rises in their stead, moved by paternal machinery, a statue of Wisdom, "which by ill-hap gets besmoked a little, but stands there visible to all." Then there is a feast.

The feast being ended, on the 17th of June there is a "batch" of fifty-four despatched at once. Fashionable Paris has now found a new fad. Blond wigs made from the hair of female victims beheaded by the paternal state have become all the rage. The skin of their bodies also is tanned at Meudon with due French skill, and transformed into fashionable material for men's breeches.

And now incorruptible Robespierre, who, according to Billaud, "has become a bore with his Supreme Being," he too is an enemy of "the people." Mutiny has broken loose among the faithful. He rises to speak in the convention, but knows that he is lost. "The blood of Danton chokes you," cries a voice. The decree of accusation is passed against his brother, too, who wishes to share his fate ; and against Saint-Just, Couthon, Lebas, and Commander Henriot, the war-god of Paris. Henriot has heard the news in town, gallops to the Tuileries with an escort, and trots off with his friends to the City Hall. Paris is in uproar ; the insurrection is raging. The convention appoints Barras as commander, and the two armed forces meet in the Place de la Gréve. Everybody shouts, but nobody fights, for Henriot's men desert him. He, standing drunk at the window of the City Hall, announces to his friends that "all is lost," and he flings himself out, or is flung out by his own friends, who reproach him for their fate. Robespierre tries to shoot himself and fails, the pistol-shot only breaking his under-jaw. Bleeding, Henriot is picked up : all are brought to an anteroom of the convention hall. "Robespierre . . . lies stretched



on a table, a deal-box his pillow; the sheath of the pistol is still clinched convulsively in his hand. Men bully him, insult him. His eyes still indicate intelligence; he speaks no word. He had on the sky-blue coat he had got made for the feast of the Supreme Being. His trousers were nankeen, the stockings had fallen over the ankles."

The next day is the 28th of July, or 10th Thermidor. At four in the afternoon the tumbrils roll again. There lies Robespierre with his half-dead brother and half-dead Henriot. Their seventeen hours of agony are about to end. A woman jumps on the tumbril to curse him; all the streets, the windows, the roofs are black with people. "At the foot of the scaffold they stretched Robespierre on the ground till his turn came. Lifted aloft, his eyes again opened, caught the bloody axe. Samson wrenched the coat off him; wrenched the bloody linen from his jaw; the jaw fell powerless; there burst from him a cry, hideous to hear and see. . . . Samson's work done, there burst forth shout and shout of applause. . . . Stricter man, according to his formula, to his credo, and his cant of probities, benevolences, pleasures of virtue, and such like, lived not in that age." \*

"The republic has now beheaded in Paris, before him, fourteen hundred people in forty-seven days."†

Carrier dies at last, he the greatest monster of all. Fouquier Tinville, the attorney-general, has to plead at his own bar, and with sixteen others he is brought to the scaffold, insulted by the people. For bread is becoming scarcer than ever; an insurrection is brewing.

On the 20th of May the drums beat and the struggle

\* Carlyle.

† Bachelet and Dezobry. *Robespierre*.

begins. "Bread !" and the "Constitution !" are now the general cries. One man rises in the Assembly and proposes a new decree : "I ask the arrest of all the knaves and cowards !" The president sits, with hat on, unyielding, although a bleeding head is held before his eyes. On the 4th of October insurrection rages again. Barras, the chief commander, is undecided ; under him is the young officer of artillery, Bonaparte, to whom an opportunity will be given, if he chooses, to show what he can do ; and who, after some hesitation, accepts the mission to stop the mob, with Murat as his adjutant.

Now the revolution is over.

The artillery at the camp of Sablons is swiftly secured before the patriots arrive to take it ; there were not twenty men there to defend it. All around the Tuileries, with stern discipline, cannon are judiciously posted ; for the Lepelletier sections are coming to storm the Louvre and the Tuileries ; and at four in the afternoon they do come like a human avalanche by all streets and passages, in military attire, with bayonet and sabre. Whereupon the young artillery officer utters one word : "Fire !" and all his guns begin thundering and roaring, killing two hundred men near the church of St. Roch. The thunder and roar continue with clock-like regularity. No "lyrism" nor "fraternity" in this ; only grape-shot, which our patriots do not stand ; a wonderful eloquence pours from these guns, which convinces the patriots very soon, and they take to their heels.

"It is false," says Napoleon, in his Memoirs, "that we fired first with blank charge. It had been a waste of life to do that."

The curtain has fallen at last. "The noblest page in any nation's history," as academical and literary France still calls this amazing record, is ended. The Corsican

## FRENCH DEMOCRACY

has picked up his horsewhip, and he will now apply it in such a way to the pack that not a man in France will stir a finger without his permission. The tiger has grappled the hyena by the throat, and at one stroke has broken her neck.

## CHAPTER V

### BONAPARTISM

EVIDENTLY somebody in France must keep down and control too "patriotic" effusions, and subdue the French mob. Our chivalrous noblemen take to their heels at the sight of "patriotic" sabres, Jacobin pikes, Phrygian caps, and such other frightful paraphernalia of French "fraternity." This is a fact duly ascertained by experience, first at Versailles when the mob played havoc with all our paternal state theatrical machinery, cutting off the heads of body-guards, breaking into the royal palace, and only appeased at length by mellifluent and amiable Lafayette; then we recorded the fact at the Champ de Mars, when our great commander, M. de Bessenal "decamped," and ran away without firing a shot, laughed at by his men and the crowd; then at the Tuileries, when the Swiss, without a commander, being one against two or three hundred ruffians, grappled "patriotism" by the throat in a life-and-death struggle, in sight of French nobility, and had to cease firing by order of our noble king, to be massacred by the mob without a protest from a single French nobleman; then in the provinces, where no nobleman was ever seen striking at a mob; then at Valmy, where, with 150,000 German soldiers at their back, under the command of a Prussian

general of Frederick the Great's school, French nobility decamped again, running away so fast with their German allies that Goethe, who happened to be in that retreat, could not keep up with their teams. All these things have to be admitted, and their sad reality recognized, unhappily for poor France. With the help of academical and literary France, of Victor Hugo's grandiloquent lyric effusions and rubbish, and of modern chauvinism, a cloak may be put on our French noblemen's historic performances; and this may answer all purposes well enough in social gatherings; but the hard fact remains that for practical political purposes there is no Leonidas, no Horatius Cocles among our French noblemen; no Greek or Roman heroism, not even Red Indian dogged pluck. They show no bravery whatever at the sight of a mob brandishing "fraternally" sharp sabres and pikes; only an immoderate desire to run away at a rapid gait towards foreign lands; too great a knowledge of the art of living—*l'art de savoir vivre*—and no desire to die. Consequently on them the nation shall not depend for practical help; but keep them merely for show and decoration, as specimens of French nobility grown up under the wings of a paternal state, with headquarters in Victor Hugo's City of Light, in the Faubourg St. Germain, where they can chat and drink tea during all the nineteenth century, and bow in their bedrooms to tiny Holy Virgins or other articles blessed by the Pope. From those aristocratic quarters they shall certainly never be required to emerge in any useful capacity whatever.

And now what could be done with our French bourgeois, our respectable middle-class man and fellow-citizen? Here, too, the prospect is dismal. Our French bourgeois, in the first place, estimable as he is in his office or shop, honest trader as he may be, excellent



man, as you say, to make cloth and silk, buttons and gloves, knick-knacks of all kinds, is necessarily the product of civilization. His number was small in the mediæval epoch; he hardly existed then except in a few important towns. Trade and industry, art, literature, and professional pursuits were rather unknown in those times when, except in Paris, Bordeaux, Rouen, Rheims, Lyons, Marseilles, and Orleans, all the people could be divided into two classes—farmers and warriors. Since that time the world has changed much, and our bourgeois, by hard work and innate sense of thrift, has become a most valuable member of the French community. We can depend upon him at all times for paying our bills, be they foolish or not, for he hates bankrupts, insolvent people, and is born honest. We can depend upon him, too, for scientific or professional achievements, where in-born care of details, technical knowledge, and natural cleverness will show at all times his true capabilities. We can depend upon him for taking good care of our streets, for municipal comfort, and other such performances of duty, in which our “free Americans” are often sadly behind him. These and similar virtues the French bourgeois has contributed generously to the national fund. But for our purpose, unhappily, we cannot depend upon him either; because for generations he has been “governed,” his attempt at maintaining provincial parliaments having miserably failed. Have not our kings, while patting him on the back with one royal hand and expressing sympathy for his industry and toil, tightly fettered him with the other royal hand; strictly prohibiting all manifestations of interest in state affairs, exacting from him due reverence to the state church, and immediate withdrawal from religious meetings not presided over by church overseers? Have not our kings

## BONAPARTISM

and masters taught our bourgeois that his first duty as a citizen is obedience to the government existing in Paris, whatever that government may be—Louis XIV. or Robespierre, royalty or “the people”? Have not all our noble lords summarily declined at all times to have an understanding with him about the royal power, declaring that his habits of thrift and perseverance in trade were distasteful to them, mere “beastly,” vulgar characteristics of lower education, bad manners and breeding? So that, unable to get the ear of such elegant noblemen, our worthy bourgeois concluded after mature reflection lasting several centuries that a paternal state, and not a fraternal nobility, could alone protect his shop.

Is not this almighty goddess, the idol of state who resides over there in Paris, the only friend he has? Noble dukes and counts do not recognize his right to be somebody; not even when, after the country has become starved and bankrupt in consequence of misrule, royalty has been pleased to summon him to Versailles, to a National Assembly, to look at the bills and devise means to pay them. Has not our bourgeois gone there—in the form of *Tiers État*, or Third Estate—with all due reverence, bowing submissively to royalty and taking off his hat before our titled fools and clergymen? And then been told by the First Estate (the Clergy) and the Second Estate (the Nobility) that he, our bourgeois, has no right to be consulted at all, only the right to pay the bills? With the result that after vain protests and reverences, summoning up some courage at last, he stamped his foot on the ground at the *jeu de paume*, with Mirabeau and others as bell-tiers to the cat; fired out, first fireworks, and then, from sheer inexperience of national fireworks, immediately collapsed before the

patriotic blaze? Our bourgeois, I say, estimable as he is, having never had the right to wear the aristocratic sword or hunt the aristocratic deer, is the poorest shot on earth, greatly afraid of a horse, terrified at athletic sports, where he might sprain his useful ankle, or where his dear boy might break an arm; with "no fight in him" and no taste for "American bear-gardens." His well-fed bosom is replete with good nature and *bon-homie*, friendliness to mankind, and kindred lyric sentiments, but he has an ineradicable, inherited conviction that "the state," in the shape of mayors and cocked-hatted *gendarmes*, has alone the right and duty to stop a thief, a fire, or a mad bull; and that his civic duty, in case of a row, is to put up the shutters of his shop, go home, lock the door, and stay there, till "officially" advised by the police that everything is now in order, imperial, royal, or republican rule having been demolished in France during the afternoon. Upon which our bourgeois, fully reassured about the existence of the state and the ubiquity of the police, opens his shop and goes to work again. That he may, after all, have a word to say in such matters, and an interest in them, is to his eye a clear absurdity.

"We tried it when we started the first revolution," says he, "and our leaders, the Girondists, the most eloquent men on earth, were shamefully beheaded, thus demonstrating clearly that we were no success as governors of France. Can we single-handed fight the mob, the *canaille*? Have we time to attend political meetings, leave the office and the children at home, read books on political economy, study French history, not to speak of foreign geography, get our noses broken by ruffians, and at the same time attend to trade, sell silks, velvets, or groceries, or make money as lawyers,

notaries, and doctors? Is not government, my foreign friend, one of those things 'that no fellow can find out,' an intricate mass of officers and bureaus where only statesmen by profession and long education, learned mandarins, should sit in upholstered arm-chairs? What are the police for? Are we not paying taxes to support government and not be bothered with it?"

With such incarnate, indestructible convictions our French bourgeois—*l'épicier* (the grocer) as his countrymen call him derisively—buttons up his pocket that always has some money in it, leaves whomsoever fate may choose to regulate state affairs, and is ready at all times to shout "*Vive Somebody!*" provided this somebody keeps the mob from his shop, and that the cocked-hatted *gendarme*, in his eyes the embodiment of good government, be in charge of the town. The same man who shouted "*Vive le Roi!*" in 1790 shouted "*Vive la République!*" in 1793, "*Vive Bonaparte!*" in 1798, "*Vive l'Empereur!*" in 1802, "*Vive le Roi!*" again in 1815; then "*Vive l'Empereur!*" again during three months; then "*Vive le Roi!*" then "*Vive la Révolution!*" in 1830; with so many similar outbursts of varied enthusiasm afterwards that we stop enumerating them.

Such is our French bourgeois, and such has he been at all times; a thoroughly domesticated animal, so perfectly trained by a paternal state that all he asks is to be left in peace to enjoy life, with liberty for himself to make some money and have some fun, liberty for his wife to go to mass; and for a change, occasional outbursts of national enthusiasm, when the soldiers march in parade on Sunday with tricolor flag and "Marseillaise" anthem, or de-file before "constituted authority" (*l'autorité constituée*) and some foreign potentate at its side. There and then only, when French flags flutter in the breeze and when



bayonets glisten in the sun, when the helmets of French dragoons and their sabres glisten, too, does our bourgeois understand the "greatness of France"; there and then will his well-fed bosom heave with patriotic enthusiasm; there and then may a patriotic tear appear beneath his peaceful eyelid at the thought that he, who never was a "hero," belongs nevertheless to a nation of "heroes." Tell him through his newspaper that France is universally recognized as the greatest nation on earth; that "perfidious" England, inhabited by selfish and brutal men of an inferior race, is dying of jealousy at the growing power of French influence; that the French flag is floating now, after heroic exertions of the French state, on some exotic, to him unknown, spot, like Taiti or Madagascar, which lies in his imagination much farther than the Pyrenees, towards the mysterious regions of America or similar "islands"; tell him that the Russian Czar, be he Alexander or Nicholas, is delighted with Paris, and has pronounced its population the handsomest on earth, and your French bourgeois will be the happiest "citizen" in the world. The state does it all for him. . . . Long live whoever is now "the state!"

Upon him, consequently, we cannot depend at all to govern the country; only to pay taxes and war indemnities—seven hundred millions of francs in 1815, five billions in 1870—and the growing interest of the largest public debt on earth, which amounts now to over thirty billion francs. Excellent man in such emergencies, our bourgeois; for all the money he has—every penny his wife saves on the children's butter, on her husband's shirt, and all that he can save by wearing his old coat and toiling at the counter—is intrusted to the state by purchasing bonds. Originally his spirit of financial enterprise stopped there; the purchase of American or



foreign securities was considered an unsafe, unreasonable venture; and it requires even now much Hebraic skill to induce him to invest his surplus, his overflowing money, in Russian or South American schemes, as a little gambling operation of no great importance. By long abstention from public affairs, the man has concentrated all his mind on his trade or his profession; happy in his way, provided you leave him alone and do not injure his business. When the disaster comes, when the explosion takes place, no man shows more serenity of mind, provided you leave him the police to protect him, his family, and his chattels.

Why the mob has ruled Paris so often, and twice burned parts of it, in 1848 and in 1870, and why France acclaimed every new ruler imposed on her, is not a difficult question to answer.

Let us proceed and look for other factors of political prosperity and peace. What are our peasants and our workingmen, our "horny-handed tillers of the soil" and our artisans?

Our peasant, very much like our bourgeois, has only one political creed: that his crop should be protected by the state. And here again our cocked-hatted *gendarme*, whose wonderful uniform and soldierly appearance strike the peasant as an awe-inspiring phenomenon of higher wisdom in Paris, appears behind the hedge of his field with a paternal sabre. "Pay your taxes, and I will see to it that your wheat, your wine, and your potatoes are safely gathered and deposited in your cellar. Mind the state curate who looks after your soul, and prays daily to the Virgin and the saints to preserve you from evil! Mind me! Me, whom you see patrolling all highways, arresting people not possessed of regular and duly-stamped government 'papers,' and collaring thieves and robbers!

What would you do without me, without my big cocked-hat, the emblem of law, and my big sabre, the emblem of order? Are you not safe under my paternal protection in this world, and the curate's recommendation for the other one?"

Our peasant, used to hard toil, and knowing by farming experience the value of a copper penny, formerly unable to read or to sign his name, and now with no more knowledge of grammar than is necessary to farming interests, has his own opinion on political matters. He, too, wants to be left alone, and be "protected by the state." The *gendarme*, to his eyes, is the representative of the state, together with some other functionaries, as the prefect or the sub-prefect, the judge and the notary, all appointed in Paris. Further he does not inquire. He knows simply that they are sent here "by the authority," that they will enforce the laws made in Paris, and that he pays taxes to be protected by them—a mission which they generally fulfil, whoever "the authority" may be.

One measure of the Revolution had a lasting influence on our peasant's destinies. The clergy and the nobility had owned two-thirds of France, and they virtually paid no taxes. The Revolution confiscated those lands and sold them to the peasant, thus dividing them up among the people. He knows this fact, and will hold to his land with unflinching tenacity. With only one ambition in life—"to own more land yet"—he lives miserably, he and his family, without ever reading a book, with no enjoyment except a drink of wine at the village tavern after he has made a good bargain on his pig or his cow. Our peasant lives very much like a brute in his filthy cabin or little stone dwelling, under no other influence than that of the curate, if he is a faithful Catholic, or

of the town politician, if he belongs to the group of "enlightened citizens," and in beautiful ignorance of all laws and facts not immediately connected with farming interests. Do not disturb the latter, and he will vote as the curate or the town politician tells him, minding his own business, selfish by instinct, saving every penny he can, and hiding his gold and silver pieces with prudent forethought. On him we cannot depend for preventing Paris dreamers or Paris adventurers from upsetting governments and taking possession of the ship's rudder. Hence the first and second Napoleonic empires and so many other political earthquakes.

Our artisan, city workman, town laborer, or mechanic is quite another man. Excitable by nature, imperfectly schooled by the state, with enough education and intelligence to take an interest in political topics, this man is the victim of his leaders. Carried away by enthusiasm after listening to the speeches of demagogues who may advocate the most absurd measures, he will "manifest," as he calls it, in the streets, following the drums and a flag with the honest conviction that he is thus asserting his manhood and his rights. What he has done the history of France in the last hundred years has shown. He is the man who, when fired to white heat by the Jacobin orators of the first revolution, "cleaned up" all the prisons during that fearful week of September, who carried heads and hearts on patriotic pikes. He at all times, as during the Commune in 1848 and in 1870, is a "French patriot," and a thorn in the side of all governments, who must either control him or be upset by him. He is the man who shouted "To Berlin!" in 1870; who invaded the Tuileries again after Sedan, and who, after having shouted, "*Vive l'Empereur!*" since 1852, whenever the third Napoleon happened to drive

through the streets, now wished to mob his wife. In Paris he is the worst citizen of all. Owing nothing except his daily wages, his pretensions are in inverse ratio to his political worth. He pays hardly any taxes at all, but he "runs" Paris as soon as the troops are withdrawn. With his ill-balanced mind, his empty phrases, and vehement expressions, he is at all times a danger to France, and it takes always an army in Paris to watch him even in ordinary times. Grape-shot alone can sober him down. Since the day when Bonaparte put an end to the first revolution by blowing him to pieces at his attack on the Louvre, our Paris workman has had to be shot down on several occasions—more than ten thousand of him in 1848 and twenty thousand in 1870, according to French estimates. As soon as the state was prostrated by disaster in 1870, our Paris patriot, faithful to his destructive instincts, kept up his old traditions.

We see in him the result of false education. His teachers were always—not priests, for he is a sceptic—but literary charlatans, from Rousseau, who began the education, to the present obscene writers who are now his favorites. Only those who have lived long enough near him to study his tastes can form an idea of his intellectual diet. Most horrible melodramas, with sensational and ludicrously tragic heroes, extolling the glories of war, the sweetness of revenge, and the luxuries of vice, are the most impressive lectures he hears. He derives from such trash most of his "patriotic" gospel. No other working-class is more cynical and coarse; it feeds on intellectual carrion, and has been flattered ever since Marat's time by every popular French orator and writer. No man has done more harm to the French working-man than his latest prophet, Victor Hugo, whose



buncombe and chauvinistic utterances will be for a long time the worst enemies of peace. Carried away by Hugo's fiery eloquence, as formerly by the paradoxes of Rousseau, and the appeals of Danton, Robespierre, and Marat, the Paris artisan imagines that the world should kneel down before him because he is "the people"; that he has no duties, only rights of all kinds. He is the man, in fine, who, taking advantage of the moral weakness of France, has made of the last hundred years of French history the most abominable political record of any nation.

Among these millions of various men of four different castes, the products of state paternalism, there are scattered all over France some thousands of other men with higher ideals, with nobler aims, as generous and sincere as the best of mankind, but powerless before these masses; and, as history shows, this has been the political result of a doctrine which had intrusted for centuries to the state the regulation of all human affairs; till the state, having absorbed all the vitality of individual minds, has reduced every man to the rôle of a political dummy.

On whom, indeed, shall we depend, when the first revolution is ended, to subdue mobs, re-establish order, and stop the slaughter? On one man alone—on Bonaparte alone! And with this conviction in her heart, France makes a complete political somersault. It re-establishes absolute monarchy under an emperor, abolishes its butchering republic, and turns back to the point from which it started. This performance takes place with lightning rapidity, for everybody is tired of dramas, and the country is poorer and more miserable than ever. A fit end and a mathematical result of paternal republics. What can a nation do without citizens? What decision can it make, when every individual man in the



country has lost the habit of thinking for himself, and has been deprived by the state of the power to criticise, amend, and correct? Here is a man who will do what the people of the country are incapable of doing! Thus imperialism, Cæsarism, and military dictatorship is a foreordained conclusion.

The man in this case was not a Frenchman; he was born in Corsica, in an Italian island, of Italian parents. His father's family was a patrician family from Tuscany, living in Florence in the twelfth century, then at Sarzana, near Genoa, where some of its members led an obscure life as aldermen and notaries. "My origin," as he says himself, in his *Memoirs*, "caused me to be considered by all Italians as their countryman."

In 1529 the family settled in Corsica. His mother, Laetitia Remolino, was a native of the island, a stingy, parsimonious, energetic woman, who imparted to him her indomitable will, her clear-sighted, practical turn of mind, and also her pluck. For they lived in troubled times, in a wild land where civil disturbances degenerated at once to guerilla skirmishes and private vendettas. The island was annexed to France by military and brutal coercion, on the 22d of May, 1769, and he was born on the 15th of August, 1769.

In his early youth he, as a foreigner, hated France and its people. Writing to Paoli, the Corsican chieftain, who fought against France for the independence of the island, to whom, after his military education was ended, he publicly addressed an open letter, he says: "I was born when our country was perishing. Thirty thousand Frenchmen were vomited on our coasts, drowning the throne of liberty in streams of blood; that is the odious spectacle which I saw. The cries of the dying, the lamentations of the oppressed, the tears of despair have

surrounded my cradle from the day of my birth. I will blacken with the brush of infamy those who deserted our common cause, those vile hearts which were corrupted by sordid greed." He writes in the same vein to Bottafuoco, a member of the Constituent Assembly, and the man who had caused the annexation of Corsica to France. Not a French bourgeois, he, with his black hair falling on his shoulders, piercing, quick glance of the eyes, and resolute military bearing; nor a French "patriot," with his contempt for "the people" of Paris and his taciturn demeanor. He looks on, saying little, but observing much. In his opinion, those crowds of titled cowards, of eloquent imbeciles, of ruffians and human hyenas would never make a republic nor a parliamentary government with constitutional monarchy. In this he certainly was not mistaken, as future events in French history will demonstrate, even after his part on earth is finished.

Buy off or bribe all those who are worth buying, and cowhide the rest! Such is the practical policy to be adopted. Above all, impose silence; which is an easy task for him if he ever takes a hand in this French game. With no individual moral strength in them, with no capable leaders, he thinks they will run away and not stand up to grape-shot. This he sees clearly. They are not like his Corsican brethren, used since boyhood, with their indomitable, revengeful temper, to tramp through lonely hills, a gun on their shoulder and a dagger at their belt, in search of their enemy.

He sees another certainty. These men are intelligent beings, not mere calves; and, like all other men, they possess a latent power which is like the force hidden in a ton of coal. In the hands of a professional engineer it can be made to lift heavy weights, crush stone, saw lumber, or perform other practical work. To this end, French

vanity itself, the love of national theatricals and national fireworks, may be used with wonderful effect. Their national performances are a shameful failure, except on the Rhine, where they have crushed the Prussian military and bureaucratic machine in a fit of rage against German interference. Give them now military glory ; let us conceal the national vulture under the appearance of a proud imperial eagle ; let them believe that that eagle is not an ignoble buzzard feeding on corpses, but a marvellous phenomenon of nature descending from the clouds, or other Jovian heights, to destroy foreign ostriches, German boobies, and such inferior beings which we will assimilate and upon which we can grow fat ! All these men love distinctions and wealth, notwithstanding their jesuitical and hypocritical republican professions of faith and all their solemn oaths ! Give them better meat, and they will at once abandon republican misery and become all Imperialists. Their paternal state has drilled them to obedience and has killed in them every spark of self-government. We shall make of them pompous ambassadors and diplomats, magnificent officers, brilliant generals, even princes and kings, and re-establish the rule of the survival of the fittest ; for fools we cannot use, but intelligent, perspicacious scoundrels like Talleyrand, Fouché, and their kindred will make excellent tools. Even such men as Sieyès, the professional architect of political edifices, can be used. He drew up republican charters, made a specialty of them ; he can now draw up an imperial constitution, and organize senators with gilt buttons and embroidered uniforms.

French nobility being of no earthly value, too decayed and too weak for possible repair, we shall make a new one ; for France can never get along without titles, decorations, crosses, multicolor trappings and uniforms.

Paternal education and innate vanity will make any government without them a hopeless task. This fact is clear to a sharp Corsican eye, not used to French literary spectacles and academical microscopes ; so clear that an immediate addition to our old stock of stage properties will even seem a most important measure. Old ducal and baronial trappings somewhat out of fashion should be overhauled, mended, washed, and ironed anew ; but a "Legion of Honor" should be instituted at once. Will not every Frenchman, being a political child grown up under paternal state wisdom, be most desirous to obtain a piece of red ribbon, as a sign that paternal state has recognized his merit and given him a piece of cake ? For will not all unruly children stop their noise and refrain from mischief in sight of paternal pie or cake ? A most admirable, cheap, and sensible French paternal institution, invented by an Italian, Bonaparte, who counted Machiavelli among his countrymen, and who understands to perfection human nature in France. A cheap and a wonderful institution, I say, prospering and thriving more than ever to-day in republican France, which, at very little cost, allows the paternal state by playing on its children's weakness to obtain a maximum of effort and obedience at a minimum of cost. The Equality motto we can keep well enough ; it does not mean anything.

Thus we shall have now kings of Naples and Westphalia, princes, dukes, and barons ! Nay, a Prince of Moskowa ; and some other Frenchman a Prince of Dalmatia, or a Duke of Elchingen, and a hundred more of them, with much money attached to the titles.

What a swift change on the national stage ! All our Phrygian caps, fraternal pikes, guillotine, and other stage properties disappear suddenly at the sound of a whistle ! The actors stopping suddenly in their grandiloquent



tirades, rushing to clear the stage of republican insignia, and reappearing immediately in new attire, embroidered uniforms, with oriental curved sabres dangling at their heels! Wonderful to behold! Twenty-one imperial prefects and forty-two imperial magistrates out of one hundred and thirty-one Republicans who voted for beheading! Fouché in the garb of a cabinet minister; also soul-overseer Talleyrand! Jean Bon Saint André, an imperial functionary! Even Drouet, the "patriot" who stopped the king's flight at Varennes with a lantern, now bowing humbly before majesty, applies for an office too, which he gets—of sub-prefect!

"At the first move of the hand," says Taine, speaking of his own countrymen with true historic veracity, "all Frenchmen have thrown themselves at his feet in obedient attitude, and they remain there as if the attitude were natural!—the small people, peasants and soldiers, with animal faithfulness; the great people, dignitaries and functionaries, with Byzantine servility. From the Republicans comes no resistance; on the contrary, it is among them that he finds the best tools for his reign, senators, deputies, councillors of state, judges, and administrators of all degrees. He has found out at once, under their cant of liberty and equality, their arbitrary instincts, their craving for authority, their need of commanding, of being the first even in secondary positions, and, moreover, among most of them their love of money and pleasure. The difference is small between a delegate of the committee of public safety and an imperial minister, prefect, or sub-prefect, for it is always the same man with two costumes, first in a *carmagnole* jacket, later on in an embroidered coat."\*

\* Taine. *Le Régime Moderne*, p. 73.



Not a score of them grumble. Of Lafayette, now in an Austrian prison since he galloped across the French boundary away from his command, Bonaparte speaks rather contemptuously. "Lafayette," says he, "is a political idiot, who will be eternally the dupe of men and circumstances."\*

That he understood his people, their combustible nature when touched with the torch of enthusiasm, their natural selfishness and greed for childish distinctions distributed by the state, their total lack of individual freedom, their inborn passion for posing, for applause, and their urgent need of order; that he knew how little opposition he would find in France to usurpation and despotic rule, and how little Frenchmen cared for liberty, equality, fraternity; that he had calculated rightly in his estimate of their worthlessness as political men and citizens, and of their real intrinsic value as intelligent tools, has been fully demonstrated by history. No despot was ever more popular anywhere.

He gave them what they wanted—despotic authority over other men, empty titles and honors, other people's money, and blood enough to wade in on the "highways of glory." What sufferings they imposed, how many hearts of women and men they broke, how many homes they ruined, how many physical and moral tortures they inflicted, no Frenchman ever deigned to consider until lately. When in more modern times their "Napoleonic glory" had ended again in shame and disaster at Sedan, and when they had felt for the third time in this century the rude hand of a foreign constable, a few voices in France began to question the policy of national highway robbery.

\* Taine. *Le Régime Moderne*, p. 73.

## BONAPARTISM

Between 1804 and 1815, according to Taine's careful estimates, one million seven hundred thousand Frenchmen and two millions of other races left their corpses on the fields of Napoleonic victories and defeats, with the ultimate result of two invasions and surrenders of France, a reduced territory, and the eternal execration of French rule by all nations. His nephew and successor continued this policy, applauded by all France, to the day when he achieved a similar result. From all these battles and slaughters, from all these hecatombs of victims of French incapacity for self-government, nothing remains to-day except international hatred and the skeleton of a great soldier incased in a huge marble tomb under the dome of the Invalides, at which tourists gaze with wonder, as they would at the remains of a mastodon or some other gigantic monster.

## CHAPTER VI

### ROYAL RESURRECTION

THE curtain has fallen on the Napoleonic drama ; the great Emperor is gone ; the great manager of the French estate has finally been expelled, not by the owners, but by the neighbors ; and the owners have become so helpless as a nation that the neighbors, not they, decide who shall be the next ruler in France. In reality, there never had been any change in the French political doctrine, and none will take place now. The state has been omnipotent at all times, and will remain so, whoever is at the helm. Its army of functionaries will continue to control and govern, to think and decide, for every man, woman, and child. To what an abject political condition every one has been reduced by paternal state authority can be seen by what happens now in France.

The two brothers of the beheaded king had been travelling for almost twenty years, roaming over Europe, plotting, intriguing, remonstrating, and protesting in all the courts of Europe, with no success whatever. But now that the hurricane is over, France will see their august faces again.

On the 20th of February, 1791, Louis Stanislas Xavier, brother of Louis XVI. and Count of Provence, born at Versailles in 1755, swore a solemn oath, accord-

## ROYAL RESURRECTION

ing to French state records, that he would never leave the soil of his beloved France ; for the paternal state was watching the king and the royal family at that time, and objected to their running away. But on the 20th of June—according to historical records—Louis Stanislas Xavier, first prince of the blood, secretly decamped, and turned up safely at Brussels, and at the head of six thousand French noblemen, who, like him, had all run away, he followed the Duke of Brunswick, who was invading France with one hundred and fifty thousand Germans. Brunswick, like many of his officers and men, had served under Frederick the Great, and Prussia's military prestige was at its height. French patriots were to be hanged and the old French monarchy restored ; but the wonderful German army, with its unparalleled discipline and war experience, was shamefully beaten. Under the command of two self-made republican generals, Dumouriez and Kellermann, the rough and badly drilled French recruits defeated the German army at Valmy. French nobility and Louis Stanislas Xavier ran away again, leaving the German allies to their fate. So panic-stricken were they that when they arrived at Verdun they decided to abandon some personal baggage in order to run faster. Louis Stanislas Xavier left all his papers and a certain pocket-book, in which he had written many names of royalist friends in Paris. For this negligence of the noble coward—future king of France—these friends and correspondents had to pay with their heads, being immediately summoned before patriotic judges who held in their hands the evidence of treason.

French patriotic guns, under direction of Dumouriez and Kellermann (the latter appointed later on Duke of Valmy by Napoleon), were shattering to pieces the military prestige of the invaders, and also the prospects of

## ROYAL RESURRECTION

French royalty. Thus only eight years after the death of Frederick the Great, his army, which the paternal Prussian state had considered invincible, proved to be, like all military establishments, an unsafe foundation for any state to build on; for the French republican armies conquered not only Belgium and Holland, but also the German Rhine; and the Prussian bureaucratic state, unable to stand these unexpected defeats, was compelled to abandon the latter to France by the treaty of Basel to avoid complete ruin. A rather glorious fact for poor republican France, torn asunder by the Revolution, with a disorganized army under untried leaders; a very inglorious one for German militarism, breaking down so miserably at the height of its perfection a few years after the death of its greatest general.

A wonderful period in French history, this Restoration! Napoleon, having been removed to Elba by the European powers, all France is now at the feet of "our beloved king," who, since he has ceased to travel, is becoming very fat, alarmingly obese. His first performance, though against foreign advice, is now to hand over the realm to his church and his nobility. Like buzzards, they have all flocked back to feed on poor France, the king leading the way. All the lands which the peasants bought from the paternal state being declared forfeit, because the owners were plotting in foreign countries against France, shall now be returned to the clergy and the nobility without any compensation whatever. Imagine the state of mind of our French peasant who bought, twenty years ago, with gold and silver pieces hoarded in woollen stockings, about one-half of the French territory, and who has toiled every day since, with due French thrift and industry, on those fields made productive by his labor! Now, after Marengo,



## ROYAL RESURRECTION

Austerlitz, Wagram, and Jena, come our royal and clerical buzzards, returning from Germany, England, and other parts, having been too pusillanimous to fight against patriots and the great emperor, only watching from safe retreats the corpses of our sons and brothers rotting on battle-fields. Is this to be endured? Is this what they call "Restoration"?

Yes! This is the Restoration, and all France will submit to it; not only does it do so, but "Byzantine servility," and such words, cannot express the attitude of the nation. The "legislative body," whose mission it is since 1795 to regulate the internal business affairs of France, calls on majesty at Compiègne, with "lyric" expressions of love and devotion to the throne. Under English and Russian pressure, majesty consents to give a constitution to his beloved subjects, but everything that has taken place since the Revolution shall be declared a myth, a fiction, a dream. And France submits with manifestations of deep gratitude.

Suddenly and unexpectedly all the royal theatrical display tumbles down, as if struck by lightning, in a chaotic mass. Panic-stricken, French nobility and clergy depart in a hurry with loud yells of anguish, and royal trunks are suddenly hauled to light with most remarkable agility, for news has come that Bonaparte has left Elba and has landed with a few followers at Cannes! What will majesty do now? What will French nobility do—they, the legal representatives of French chivalry? What they always did in times of crisis! Run away with utmost speed, as they always did and always will do on similar occasions. The king arrives in Ghent before Bonaparte has reached Paris, beating the latter in one way at least—rapidity of locomotion.

This is no longer the old royal comedy, no longer a

## ROYAL RESURRECTION

republican tragedy or a Napoleonic drama ; this is now French national opéra-bouffe ; but France objects to nothing. The state has destroyed every spark of political manhood or dignity among the people and the rulers. Besides, it is getting used to such unexpected theatrical changes, and has lost all political shame. It has already acquired, like the Romans of the decadence, the habit of acclaiming everybody or anybody as its father. The same Paris that shouted "Long live the King !" in the forenoon make themselves hoarse in the afternoon shouting "Long live Napoleon !" The habit was taken, and will remain a national one in France, a practical solution of all difficulties. What difference does it make after all to the great mass of the nation ? Is not the paternal state indestructible and supreme ? We shall have the same cocked-hatted *gendarmes* and police, the same ubiquitous functionaries, judges, and civil officers, all appointed from above by the state ! Do we not pay taxes to be protected and governed by the state ?

Here are the fruits of the paternal tree which has extended its deadly shade over all human energies. Firmly rooted in the populist doctrine that the state should regulate human activity, it has now stretched its branches in all directions, causing moral and political lethargy under its protecting shade. Consequently, the nation being now but a tool, a passive instrument in the hands of the state, other men than Frenchmen must regulate its affairs, and die to re-establish order in France.

The old Imperial Guard will fight, but not for the nation, only for its war-god, with conspicuous bravery ; but they do not die at all so dramatically as histrionic Victor Hugo and other lyric worshippers of national humbug assert. For Cambronne himself, their commander, although gallantly refusing to surrender, lives

a great many years afterwards, having been only wounded and taken by the English. He lives even in such remarkably good health that in 1818, bowing respectfully before majesty, he gets himself appointed to the office of "Royal Lieutenant-General of the Realm"—a fair illustration of French fickleness and of French literary contempt for historical truth.

The struggle is ended; the foreign armies reoccupy Paris. Now is the time for our vagrant royalty and nobility to repack trunks again, and reappear among their countrymen. The great plunderer is gone on an English war-ship towards South African climes, the French paternal police is at work with the help of foreign soldiers, and everything is now lovely in the City of Light.

Fouché, once a priest, a man endowed by nature with an uncommon dose of shrewdness, and admitted by general verdict to be the champion rascal of France!—he, the very demagogue, the high functionary of the patriotic republic, who organized massacres and who stood in Lyons, opera-glass in hand, at the window of the government palace to watch the execution of two hundred and ten men and women—he, Fouché, who, with Carrier, Saint-Just, and other butchers, surpassed Nero in crimes, who demanded so vociferously the execution of Louis XVI., our king's own brother, and voted for his death; who then became chief of Napoleonic police, whom Bonaparte despised and even dismissed once for treason, reappointing him because he found nobody so able to perform dirty work—he, Fouché, shall now become one of the props of French royalty.

The other man is Talleyrand, the most cynical, unprincipled scamp in European diplomatic history. He was originally a Catholic bishop, then overseer of souls,

## ROYAL RESURRECTION

who, as Carlyle says, blessed our new revolutionary tricolor flag “with two hundred pieces of crown-shaved white calicoes standing on the steps of fatherland’s altar”—a man who, being Minister of Foreign Affairs of the French Republic, was dismissed under the Directoire, then conspired with Bonaparte to overthrow the Republic, and then, as Bonaparte’s Secretary of Foreign Affairs, plotted the overthrow of his benefactor and master, and whom Napoleon one day asked contemptuously, “How much did they pay you to tell me such a lie?” He, this Talleyrand, shall now plead for royalty before Czar Alexander, and, if successful, be well rewarded and paid.

Thus Louis XVIII. was re-established on the throne of France. He died at last in 1824, kept on this throne by foreign bayonets during ten years, leaving no children; and his brother, the Count d’Artois, younger brother of Louis XVI. and grandson of Louis XV., the maintainer of Versailles harems, succeeds as head of the state. He, too, is an old “traveller,” having safely retreated at all critical times without showing the least inclination for heroism of any kind. One Russian empress, Catharine II., famed as a witty and able woman, received him once, in 1791, at St. Petersburg, whither the noble prince had gone to solicit aid against his countrymen. She declined to help him, receiving him rather coldly, but presenting him with a sword; whether or not as an ironical mark of esteem, history does not say.

After that visit he had departed for England, then at war with France, and had there been called upon by a delegation of royalist inhabitants of the Vendée, where priests, fanatic peasants, and a few country noblemen had decided to rebel. An English fleet carried him to the Vendean coast in August, 1795, where the insurrec-



tion had begun ; but on reaching the place of landing, our noble prince of the blood positively declined to leave the English ship. Charrette, the insurrectionist leader, tried in vain to persuade him to land. "Put yourself at our head, and our peasants, who are waiting for you in strong columns, will march on to Paris and hang the demagogues." Useless entreaties ! He turns back without even touching French soil, to live at ease in England, appointing poor Cadoudal, in his brother's name, Lieutenant-General of France.

In 1814, after Bonaparte is gone, he rushes forward and arrives in Paris, to be received by Talleyrand with all due reverence. He appoints himself "Commander-in-Chief"—for the war is now over—and when his brother Louis XVIII. arrives, he proudly takes his seat near the throne. But as soon as the news reaches Paris that Bonaparte has left Elba, he decamps hastily to join his brother at Ghent.

What this man did every one knows: intrusted by France with state authority, he had no other aim but to establish the omnipotence of the Jesuits and the privileges of the clergy and nobility. His contemptible character was visible in all his acts. Finding the charter granted by his brother at the dictation of the allies an obstacle to his plans, by one stroke of his royal pen he abolished it. The editors of all the liberal newspapers, fearing for their liberty and their lives, proclaimed revolution ; and "the king of France" departed in haste for England, there to finish his disgraceful existence. If the revolt which expelled Charles X. was certainly justified, the mob revolution which expelled Louis Philippe in 1848, and launched France again in the old path to disaster, was a new blot on the history of the nation. A constitutional ruler of high personal character, obliged



## ROYAL RESURRECTION

to abandon the country to political adventurers, to bad republicans, and worse Bonapartists, Louis Philippe had done nothing to deserve French animosity. He had good personal qualities, sterling common-sense. But the French press, to whom the paternal state had now conceded all liberty, used its right to revile him before the people; they held up to the masses the memory of "the glories of the first republic." French chauvinism could not pardon him his abhorrence of useless wars, his dislike of military show, his friendship for England, and his unwillingness to launch the country into adventures which he wisely considered disastrous for France. His popularity was killed by his good sense, for his countrymen had none, as the sequel has shown. From political immorality, caused by state omnipotence, new modern diseases had grown, individual depravity, coarse materialism, and other national ills, culminating, as we shall see, in national degradation with the red flag as the national emblem.

## CHAPTER VII

### FRENCH POPULISM

BETWEEN 1792 and 1848, a period of fifty-six years, France established and upset its paternal government eight times. There was an absolute monarchy, then a constitutional monarchy, then a republic, then the empire, then monarchy for a while, then the empire again for three months, then reactionary monarchy, and then constitutional monarchy on the English pattern. And whatever label was pasted on the paternal weathercock, the nation always applauded, or at least refrained from expressing popular indignation. But a new change now becomes necessary, according to the leaders of public opinion, for constitutional monarchy "makes nobody happy."

"Corruption is too great among the upper classes." Paris says so; and indeed the leading classes of France, modernized now in their habits and wants, have inaugurated a new kind of oppression—money power—which the paternal state is called upon to remove. According to public opinion of that time, the newly born money power is openly buying national distinctions, seats in the House of Lords, and control of railroads, which are government enterprises fostered by the state; bribing judges, members of parliament, newspaper editors, and the lead-

ing public men. Paternal railroads are, besides, so shockingly administered that, in 1848, everybody who uses them is afraid of his life; for official investigations showed that the disasters and slaughters which took place were due not to accident, but to the incapacity of employés. More than a hundred corpses were dug out of the ruins of the train to Versailles, among them the corpse of Dumont d'Urville, the great French admiral and geographical explorer. When France began to build railroads, the paternal state had necessarily to interfere in the interest of the "public welfare." Was it not the state's legitimate duty to see that railroads were well made, by competent, diplomaed engineers, and controlled by responsible companies? But the result was that the paternal state being only an ideal overseer, the charters and railway privileges were granted by bribed politicians to "syndicates," or "rings," who built bad roads and appointed incapable men, while the people has to pay exorbitant prices for paternal transportation and for the blessing of a state monopoly. This led to a further result; for in 1847 it caused open rebellion, so that troops from Arras, Douai, and Valenciennes were summoned in haste to protect certain railroad stations from destruction by the mob.

The fact is, that a new era was dawning on the world. Two new factors had appeared in political and social evolution: the money power and the newspaper power. In France, after 1840, everybody speculates, buying and selling "shares." The French politician—a new phenomenon—had made his appearance, quite different from the old-time Jacobin demagogue. With his oratorical utterances in printed form, or in open meetings, he had already found out that political popularity was a source of great wealth whenever state interference blocked

## FRENCH POPULISM

the way in industrial enterprises—a discovery which the New World also made one day in Washington by investigation of the *Crédit Mobilier*. In France, where the state is more powerful than in America, there seemed in those times no limit to politicians' prosperity, according to the prevailing public opinion. Rivalries and jealousies led daily to the discovery of "jobs," showing clearly to the people that its leaders were selling paternal favors and protection to the highest bidder. The parliamentarism which was imported from England should make the people politically happy; but it does not. Revolution is again inevitable. Why?

In the first place, our paternal state, with its French House of Commons and its French House of Lords, persists as formerly in extending over all citizens its tutelary hand. When, for instance, in 1844, the state wishes to borrow one hundred millions, parliament is bribed, and the government instructed to sell all the bonds at a bargain to Rothschild, who receives them at eighty-four. Then "the state," being able to decide suddenly several questions of foreign policy, our politicians manipulate "foreign policy," in understanding with Rothschild, and the bonds are sold on the Stock Exchange with enormous profit due to "foreign policy." Rothschild thereby gets control of the Paris-Brussels railroad shares, which the firm owns to this day. It is subsequently found that the most influential members of parliament, and the newspapers too, have been bought up in this and other operations. France was digging great canals to facilitate inland transportation; and, as in the case of the railroads, the state takes the matter in hand, appointing favorite companies to perform the work, and the people is robbed.

Financial dishonesty is so general that a member of

## FRENCH POPULISM

parliament, Léon de Maleville, calls Prime Minister Guizot, in open session, "an abettor of thieves"; although Guizot himself is a conscientious man. Émile de Girardin, the editor of *La Presse*, an opposition newspaper, calls the Minister of Justice a *tartufe*, accuses the state of selling seats in the House of Lords for eighty thousand francs a seat, and of having made one million two hundred thousand francs by altering post-office regulations. Lagrange, the Inspector of Government Hospitals, swindled the inmates of these state establishments; he did it so long that at last he has to be convicted and sent to the penitentiary. The French institution of state notaries, whose number is strictly limited by law, and without whose co-operation no sale of real estate, no important contract can be registered or made, has become in popular opinion an institution of embezzlers; the office, being very lucrative, is sold sometimes as high as a million francs; and in five years over one hundred state notaries become embezzlers, or disappear with private funds. Teste, the president of the Court of Cassation—the highest court in France—formerly Minister of Public Works, and General Cubières, a peer and former Secretary of War, are both sentenced as swindlers in relation to the state grant of the Gouhenans mines. The father of Cubières had been a page of Louis XV. and an equerry of Louis XVI.\* All these facts are notorious and public, and before them the paternal state is powerless; with its grants, monopolies, contracts, and prerequisites, it is now the prey of all those who are intelligent enough to secure a seat in its tutelary shade. Thus French populism, working for the public welfare in theory, has

\* Bachelet and Dezobry. *Cubières*.



practically put a premium on individual rascality. And the people knows it.

The opposition, sitting in the parliament with Thiers, Ledru-Rollin, de Girardin, and a score of others, never think for a moment of removing the primary cause of all these evils. Frenchmen are so accustomed to the ubiquitous control of the state that nobody proposes to deliver private enterprises from state interference, to abolish the many state monopolies against which there is no possible redress, and which rob the nation, directly or indirectly, under the plea of working for the interest of all. Nobody perceives that the more you allow the state to manage railroads and canals, to make contracts with builders, to grant valuable concessions and charters, and to influence the Stock Exchange by parliamentary or cabinet decisions, the wider you open the door to injustice, to abuses, to venality, and political corruption, and the quicker you hasten the popular reaction and the revolutionary explosion. But France is too much crazed by traditional doctrines, preached by visionary prophets and demagogues, to allow free competition, laws of supply and demand, individual methods, and other self-regulating forces to take their natural course. The people sees only one thing: that the evils exist, that the demoralization has become general among the middle classes as well as among the upper classes; and, taking recourse to its old methods, it now calls upon the paternal state to remove the evils. The first step is naturally to upset constitutional monarchy.

But there is another evil at the bottom of all these troubles, which has now broken out with such virulence that national superficiality and short-sightedness alone can ignore its fearful ravages. With the increase of all means of education among the middle and lower classes,

French literature, which formerly circulated only among the upper stratum of society, has become common property. Books, pamphlets, and newspapers, which in former years reached only aristocratic readers, can now be purchased and read by all; and the poison that was contained under the old régime in silly, pretentious, fashionable novels and sonnets, becomes now a wide stream of foul, infecting matter, overflowing all Paris, poisoning half-educated minds, lowering more and more the nation's tastes and ideals. After 1840, literary carrion becomes the favorite food of the middle and lower classes, its stench being hidden under the flowers of rhetoric and the clever style of the writer. The modern French literary axiom, that a writer should have no other aim but to express sensations and impressions without regard for their more or less refined nature, that he should have no moral duty, no interest in the improvement of man, and that art for art's sake is the object of an artist, was now asserting itself under the leadership of a galaxy of popular authors.

Thus begins, during the reign of Louis Philippe, this flow of putrid literature, which has spread from Paris ever since the days of Eugene Sue, George Sand, Jules Sandeau, de Musset, and other "admirable"—now half-forgotten—writers; a putrid literature in which Zola and other modern authors now shine with the same phosphorescent light to the enthusiastic applause of Parisian critics, fashionable Europe, and universal cosmopolitan dandyism; a putrid literature which, if it were only a matter of taste like other Paris fashions, could be considered simply as a ridiculous product of French civilization, but which, by inciting all the half-educated classes to murder and plunder, to public obscenity, under the pretence that "property is theft," that "mar-

riage is immoral," that "society is rotten," that "women are born free," becomes more deadly than cholera, more inimical to mankind than venomous cobras or tuberculosis. What Eugene Sue, George Sand, de Musset, and such people think the proper relations should be between modern men and women may certainly interest their friends; and nobody has a right to interfere by assuming the functions of puritanical censorship—the state certainly less than anybody else, for it could proscribe, upon the same principle of public welfare, the very best works of reform. But when such utterances lead to a general negation by the people of all higher standards necessary to a peaceable existence on earth, when, in consequence of such teachings, culminating in the maxims of Proudhon, individual thrift, perseverance in work, economy, and the sense of duty itself run the risk of being persecuted and proscribed, it may well be time for individual man to establish for himself a quarantine against such prophets, especially when the very temple of the new religion, Victor Hugo's "City of Light," has, as a consequence of such a gospel, presented to the world the most ghastly spectacle of political disease and of constant butcheries.

In countries where no paternal state exists, where the government is restrained from interfering in everybody's affairs, restrained from controlling or paralyzing individual activity, restrained from leading a man to fortune by delegating to him powers and authority, or by conferring on him titles, decorations, and distinctions of every kind; where it is restrained from injuring a man's prospects by regulations and edicts affecting his purse, his career, or the career of his children, in such a country the political and social gospel preached by French radicalism cannot produce immediate demoralization.

But in a country where the state is omnipotent, where a dozen politicians can affect all values on the Stock Exchange, designate certain men as fit for distinctions, decide the building of railroads and canals, the opening up and the working of mines, and patronize or antagonize newspapers, manufacturers, trading corporations, etc., the struggle for life among the citizens presents a different aspect. Ingenuity, persevering work, industry, and all those qualities which characterize a man of real worth, cease to be the true factors of individual prosperity; tact and pleasing manners—often concealing real indifference to wrongs—shrewd skill in obtaining protection, and cleverness in securing patrons, become the true sources of a citizen's success. If his future fortune, his career, his fame, depend upon the state, shall he not do his utmost and strain every nerve in order to secure bureaucratic good-will? Is not his intimacy with the Minister of Public Works, the Minister of Public Transportation, the Minister of Fine Arts, the Minister of Public Instruction, much more valuable to him if he wishes to secure a contract, to be appointed railroad manager, to have his pictures advertised by a purchase for the state's gallery, or to be selected as a professor in a state college, than years of patient and meritorious efforts?

Now, how does French literature react in 1848 on all minds that have been educated by the paternal state?

The connection is clear. Has not every man the ambition to "succeed in life"? And in his efforts to secure wealth, distinctions, and reputation leading to wealth, does he not strain his eyes to discover the shortest and surest road? Whence does he derive information on the subject? Is it not from the newspapers he reads, and from popular works which lie before him, and in-



form him on the moral situation of the country? If the recognized experts in national psychology, the great observers of social forces, the most intelligent writers on social life, have all come to the conclusion that the social edifice is rotten, that corruption is general, that honest men have no chance in the general scramble, that "grabbing," not working, is the magic pass, what road will the citizen follow?

By such reasoning Paris decided in 1848 not only to dismiss the king, but to proclaim the socialistic commune. Its red flag has already been noticed once by the reader, under the first republic, at the Paris Town Hall, when Lafayette succeeded in having it removed. "We all have a right to live and be happy! Your state was by common consent the maker of all private fortunes, the only recognized reliable advertiser of private reputations and names! We never had a share in your speculations, in your contracts; we cannot marry off our daughters, having no dowry to bribe young men with; we never could secure wealth and luxuries! You, who, according to all literary evidence, are using the state's influence to become rich and happy by all and any means, you shall make room for us!"

Thus "the people" again invaded the Tuileries and the Palais Royal.

"Furniture, vases, pictures, chandeliers, everything was smashed and thrown out of the windows. One man, with muddy shoes, sprang on the throne and waved a red flag. They then took the throne, dragged it through the streets, and made a bonfire with it. A bust of Louis Philippe was smashed to pieces. There was general merriment. The poor workmen threw themselves on silk and velvet cushions. They plundered the royal pantry and cellar, and everybody made preparations for staying



there. Masses of people had made it their home, especially the girls of St. Lazare. There were thirteen hundred such girls detained at the old St. Lazare convent, used as a jail and hospital at the same time. They were called 'Vésuviennes.' During the insurrection they had been liberated and brought to the Tuileries in order to play there such antics as no royal palace ever saw. . . . Only two weeks later did the provisional government clear up the Tuileries, where the lowest class of the Parisian populace had formally settled down. They had had there a great ball on the 26th of February, and the orgies had continued ever since. The 'Vésuviennes' asked to be organized as a corps of 'fighting amazons.' Caussidière, the Prefect of Paris, put a stop to these scenes. The mob threatened to burn the palace down unless a sum of money were paid; but they succeeded in expelling them by force. The beautiful palace of the king at Neuilly and one of the Rothschild's villas had in the meanwhile been burned down; the mob was seeking revenge on those who had made most money."\*

The insurrection rages now everywhere, not against absolute monarchy, as in 1793 or in 1830, but against constitutional government, another form of paternal government. Since the state does not provide for all the worthless people in France, since it confines its favors to politicians and "rings," it must be destroyed. The usual Paris barbarities take place, although there are fifty-five thousand soldiers of the regular army in the city, commanded by Marshal Bugeaud, a warrior of Algerian fame. The king does not wish to spill the people's blood; he has resigned, handing his abdication to Thiers, who for ten years has much

\* Menzel. Vol. V., pp. 201-208.

contributed to all this mischief by his glorification of the "Great Napoleon," of the "people's virtues," of the "Republic" and other such contradictory French "platforms." Thiers, a little busybody, born poor but a millionaire at his death, has asked for constitutional monarchy; then after he had it, he opposed every measure of the government, brandishing in poor Louis Philippe's face Napoleon's "military glories." After the king had given him a leading place in the cabinet, he proved so arbitrary that parliament compelled him to resign. From that day he tried to upset the state by appealing to "the people." Now that "the people" is in power and will soon acclaim another Napoleon, he opposes "the people" and its new favorite. The result will be that Napoleon III. will finally gag him for a number of years, till the German army lays siege to Paris, when Thiers will try to gather up the pieces of his country's government in Versailles.

General Lamoricière proceeds to read the abdication document to "the people." But he is stopped by some republican leaders who are not satisfied with its form. "Go back! The abdication must include all the Orleans dynasty!" As Lamoricière turns his horse to go back, they fire at him, wound him, and kill his horse. His soldiers come to his rescue, but they are surrounded and take refuge in a large building called the "Château d'Eau," near the Palais Royal. They hold out for one hour till the people sets fire to the building and burns them alive. There were in it one hundred and eighty-three men of the Fourteenth Regiment. The king's son, the Duke of Orleans, his wife, and her two children, have gone to the parliament, where they are respectfully received; but "the people" breaks through the gates, demolishes the door, and the armed mob takes possession

of the hall. Lamartine tries to make a speech, but the armed mob pushes its way through, almost crushing the Duchess of Orleans against the wall. She becomes separated from the children; one of them—the little Count of Chartres—falls under the feet of the mob. Some members of parliament rush to her rescue, and with the utmost efforts succeed in saving her and the little Count of Paris by breaking through a back door. The other child is finally picked up from under the feet of the mob by an Alsatian named Lippmann, who saves him and returns him to his mother after she has left Paris.

The eruption of the volcano, to which all France had contributed by its political stupidity and its moral degradation under the state's tutelary protection, has now taken place, and the torrent of glowing lava and mud is running through Paris. Amid all the disorder, confusion, and general anarchy stands one man, impractical, short-sighted, but high-minded and truly noble. This man is not a soldier like Lafayette, whom he equals in true patriotism; he is a poet, a true poet with higher ideals than Napoleonic battle-fields, or Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity mottoes, and such other standards. He is not a Victor Hugo, not a gifted and eloquent humbug, but a man with a true heart, and truly noble instincts. This man is Lamartine. With boiling indignation in his heart, pale but undismayed by threats, pistols, or sabres, he has rushed to his country's rescue, and his clear voice, dominating the hurricane, now rings before the City Hall. They ask for his head, wave a red flag in his face, and his doom is decided by howling French "fraternity." He, all alone, with sublime heroism, with no other ally but the great God who inspired his verses, with no other weapons but the fire which burns in his soul, feels no

fear — only contempt. There he stands on the balcony of the Paris City Hall, over the howling sea of brutes who clamor for his head, looking indignantly at them, with fire darting from his eye. Not a Victor Hugo, this man ! But a noble figure, the noblest perhaps in all this French history ; and with a thundering voice, in words which became immortal, he cried : “ You scoundrels ! Your flag has never seen but parades on the Champ de Mars, and has been dyed only in the blood of your countrymen ! But the tricolor which you have torn down has carried the fame of the nation around the world ! ”

The power of this man, who stands all alone, proves greater than the rage of the mob. They recoil amazed ; on him their power is gone, for he does not fear them ; his contempt of them has stopped their yells. They stand aghast, for they never saw such a man ! “ Does he not look like a leader of men, he, on that balcony ? ” A few begin to applaud, and the whole mob breaks suddenly into cheers. Not a Bonaparte, with thundering artillery blowing “ the people ” to atoms, but a greater man yet in this case ! The leader of the mob, Lagrange, who has been seen all day holding a naked sabre in his hand, having appointed himself “ Governor of the City Hall,” has to wait. The people will not act ; and he himself does not dare in this moment to ask again for the head of the poet. So Lamartine has conquered the City Hall, he alone ; the troops being unable to do it.

What will French democracy do now ? As they do not dare to kill the popular poet, they must expel him. But how ? He has possession of the City Hall, where he organizes a provisional government. They cart there dead bodies of men and horses, which are piled under the windows, hoping that Lamartine, with his refined feel-



ings and habits, will have to depart, with all his associates, being unable to endure the stench. But this failed also. No human being, be he alive and armed, or be he dead and rotting, will keep Lamartine from fulfilling his duty to the end. The literary and fashionable carrion of Eugène Sue, George Sand, and others, has never affected his pure mind. He alone among the popular French writers, having refused to accept it as a literary ideal, now finds strength enough to be a true hero.

On the 26th, Lamartine, who had persuaded Louis Blanc, one of the socialist leaders, to stand by him in the interest of all France, obtains leave for the royal family to depart unharmed. Louis Blanc is appointed by the provisional government Minister of Improvements. The palace of the Luxembourg is handed over to the working-class, to hold there a congress in the hall of the House of Peers under the presidency of a workman, one Albert, who sits there in working-man's clothes, and who, with the help of his fellow-workmen, is going to abolish poverty and want by promulgating decrees. So the working-class, with full consent of the government, decide that national workshops (*ateliers nationaux*) shall be established in all France under the paternal state supervision. They can do what they please; the national workshops are opened, and on the first day twenty thousand workmen begin "national manufacturing" at the expense of the paternal state. It is soon found out that work being easy and well paid, there are over one hundred thousand workmen to be given work. Has socialism not declared to the paternal state that "labor shall now be organized"? And has not the paternal state acquiesced, opening its treasury wide? Now my socialistic friends, what else did you want? Was it not



all you wished in order to transform this world into a socialistic paradise ?

But what is the trouble now ? The paternal state can certainly manufacture furniture and boots, clothing and crockery by the ton and by thousands of tons, but can it compel people to buy them ? The state has given with a free hand, showing its best will, and has poured into the laps of the working-men all the capital they asked for, millions upon millions. But can the paternal state, by unanimous parliamentary vote and duly signed and countersigned decree, magically transform bad wares into good ones, make a shaky table stanch, and bad boots serviceable ? On the 30th of May, 1848, according to official government records, there are one hundred and fifteen thousand men at work in the national workshops, each man receiving two francs a day, a fair pay for the time, considering Paris prices. And the total amount of cash expended by the national workshops reaches fourteen millions in a few weeks. Similar national workshops are established in other cities of France, notably in Lyons and Marseilles. In Lyons, when the measure is stopped, it is found that the workshops have absorbed one million six hundred and fifty-two thousand francs, and that the value of the wares manufactured there during all that time reaches the wonderfully "grand total of thirty thousand francs." The wares manufactured by paternal state authority and under its "official" supervision in these national workshops are everywhere unsalable, useless, bad, and costly ! Such is the result obtained by our socialistic friends, not denied to this day by any French writer, and demonstrated by practical cash accounts.\*

\* Bachelet and Dezobry. *Ateliers Nationaux.*

## FRENCH POPULISM

What is to be done? Continue such a business? Paternal government cannot do it, for even a French state cannot transform a pair of bad breeches into good ones! With bankruptcy staring us all in the face, as sure as death, if we keep doing business on such terms, we have to stop now, demonstrating thus to the world, by an object-lesson too much forgotten to-day, what fools we have been!

But to this unavoidable result, Paris, the City of Light, objects, and its popular clubs decide otherwise, being resolved to overrule nature. One hundred thousand citizens hold a meeting on the square of the Bastille, where formerly the old monarchy's dungeon had stood. The place shall inspire the meeting by the evocation of the glorious remembrances of the past. The "people" deliberates, and in its wisdom it has solved the question: "War must be declared in order to deliver Poland; one thousand millions shall be distributed to the poor of Paris; the money to be collected by a special tax on the rich." And this decree shall be handed to the National Assembly, being "the will of the people," by one hundred thousand armed citizens.

Lamartine, always fearless and prompt, tried in vain to interfere. Popular imbecility too great, too vast, too ocean-like in the City of Light! The provisional government has waited so long that its life hangs only by a thread. The hall of the assembly is stormed by an armed mob smashing the doors and surging into the building, a living stream of howling fanatics. The representatives of the people, being "traitors," shall be torn to pieces! But at this moment drums are heard; companies of soldiers appear, and "the people" begins to run away. The hall is cleared. Lamartine addresses Ledru Rollin, the radical leader. "The insurgents," says he, "are

misusing your name ! Show France that they lie, that you are not a traitor ! Follow me and let us reoccupy the City Hall !” Ledru Rollin follows on horseback, like Lamartine, and the City Hall is retaken ; some rebel leaders are arrested there. Barbès, Albert, and Huber are sentenced at once to transportation ; Blanqui, to seven years’ imprisonment. Louis Blanc runs away.

And on this very same day, after Lamartine has triumphed, cries and shouts are heard everywhere in Paris, “Long live the Emperor !” for a Bonaparte has arrived from England, and the “glorious Napoleonic legend” has been recalled in the memories of the people. When the elections take place in Paris on June 8th, he is elected to the assembly, where two of his cousins are already sitting ; but, preferring to await the result of the inevitable struggle between the provisional government and the mob, he returns for a while to England, stating “that his name shall not be connected with civil war.”

The French paternal state remains in a most critical condition, confronted by the Paris mob—by one hundred thousand workmen of the national workshops, all armed and equipped for slaughter ; and as all workmen have flocked from the country to Paris, because they can there be kept at the expense of the state with no distinction of individual working efficiency, the number of the enemies of the paternal state increases daily at an ominous rate.

At last, after several days of uninterrupted battle and slaughter, the last barricade is stormed by General Courtiges, who leads the attack, and is wounded himself. And thus ends another “glorious page” in Paris history—the immortal deed of French socialistic democracy—to be repeated in almost similar manner, but

on a greater scale yet, after the Franco-German war of 1870. How many people were killed in 1848 nobody ever knew. The corpses were not counted. The estimates run from ten thousand to twelve thousand.

All Europe, excepting England, is now ablaze and bleeding from civil war. Everywhere "paternal state" is reaping its reward. But see what is happening now in London, where a monster procession, organized by Irish demagogues, is going to present to the English parliament such a petition as England never saw! Shall French methods invade London, too, and a howling mob dictate to an English parliament what "the will of the people" has decided? No! Happily not, for England and also for the world; for one hundred and fifty thousand English "gentlemen" have enrolled themselves as constables, and the mob, hearing of it, comes to the conclusion that in a country where "gentlemen" to the number of one hundred and fifty thousand will willingly serve as constables, with no likelihood of their running away like French nobility, it will be safer and better to abstain from French methods of government. Thus England has peace in those troubled times, civil war raging everywhere on the Continent, where all the paternal states are tumbling into chaos and anarchic confusion.

The spectacle presented by the continental nations of Europe after the restoration of the monarchy in France was another evidence of the disastrous results of state omnipotence. The history of those times, between 1815 and 1848, is almost forgotten to-day. While England was building up its enormous colonial empire, while Anglo-Saxon America was erecting a gigantic political edifice in the wildernesses of the New World, continental Europe was engaged in riots, conspiracies, diplo-



## FRENCH POPULISM

matic intrigues, and civil wars. Not one of these continental states enjoyed the blessings of durable peace. Blood was flowing in Spain, in Portugal, in Italy. Revolutions broke out in Belgium, in Hungary, in Poland, in Switzerland, as well as in France, even before the great explosion of 1848, when military repression ceased even in Germany to maintain established authority.

England, already in the time of Canning, was trying everywhere to stop the persecutions begun by the despotic governments of Germany, Russia, and France against the liberal movement; but the unprincipled, unscrupulous continental statesmen, the Russian Czar Nicholas, the German states, especially Austria, French politicians like Talleyrand and Thiers, and such contemptible leaders as Metternich, had converted European populations into discontented, rebellious, revolutionary mobs, which German, French, and Russian bayonets could not succeed in keeping down. Thus a French army permanently occupied Rome in support of popery and absolute despotism. Germany enforced its military and brutal tyranny with the same object in view, and Germanic Austria flogged not only its soldiers, but even Italian women, in order to maintain the blessings of German "superiority" in poor, bleeding Italy. The horrors committed in Lombardy by these German despots—by the Austrian General Haynau, for instance, the German "butcher," whose mustaches were torn off by an enraged English mob when he happened to show himself in London—have disappeared from our memories. Had the French court of 1830 higher standards of public decency than its predecessors? A single fact, also forgotten to-day, may throw some light on this question, for Charles X.'s daughter-in-law, the Duchess of Berry, who would have been Queen of France if her husband,



## FRENCH POPULISM

the heir to the French crown, had not been assassinated by Louvel, gave birth to an illegitimate child in the castle of Blaye. She had returned to France after the revolution of 1830, in order to foment civil war in the Vendée, for she claimed the crown for her son, the Comte de Chambord, the French pretender, who died a few years ago. Being discovered and arrested by the government of her cousin, Louis Philippe, she had been confined at Blaye; and there her illegitimate child was born, the name of whose father she refused to reveal to the French government. Such a woman had presided at the court of Charles X., exceedingly popular, and esteemed by French nobility; and her son, the Comte de Chambord, or "Henry V.," as the French legitimists called him, might have ruled France after the Franco-German war, when the crown was tendered to him, if he had made a few concessions at that time to the liberals. But he insisted on abolishing the national tricolor flag and substituting for it the old royal standard of the French monarchy. This woman afterwards married again—an Italian count. Chateaubriand has called her a martyr and a saint.

Nobody takes any interest to-day in this contemptible epoch of European history, for all these persecutions, these slaughters, these riots, these civil wars have resulted in vain attempts to stop the world's progress. Hardly a single measure enforced by these tutelary governments, by military coercion, by brutal repression, or diplomatic intrigue, has left a useful impression that might gratefully be remembered to-day. Austrian despotism had finally to withdraw from Italy, and had to recognize Hungarian home-rule in the end. The French soldiers had to abandon Rome to the Italians, and stop meddling in Spanish affairs, as well as in Mexican affairs

## FRENCH POPULISM

later on. And during that time, in our own century, Anglo-Saxon individual energy and enterprise gained control of the world. Compare the work accomplished by the paternal states of continental Europe between 1815 and 1865, during fifty years of continental state despotism, with the work accomplished by the English-speaking communities !

## CHAPTER VIII

### OLD GERMANY

WE saw Germanic princes in former times, sitting in solemn assemblies regulated by feudal law, in the great hall of some German city, acting as a kind of national committee presided over by a constitutional leader, the Germanic emperor, elected by the Germanic constitutional chieftains ; all acting as delegates, deputies hereditary or elective of all German freemen, who, as history tells us, were even called upon to ratify their leaders' decision. But in the end the Germanic emperor had no power, no authority, no resources ; he was a mere figure-head ; all the German princes were independent petty monarchs, cut out on the pattern of Louis XIV., whom they tried to imitate. And the people lost all its rights. Like cattle pent up by a master, beaten and kicked into place, with even more servility than their Gallo-Frankish neighbors, who at last exploded in volcanic fury, the German "subjects" submitted patiently. When a master, like Frederick the Great, lifted his cane and applied it over the shoulders of a "German gentleman," the latter meekly ducked his head.\* In some

\* Frederick the Great always carried a cane, and, according to the German fashion, used to beat his subordinates, even his generals. The habit prevailing now—as we shall see later—of beating the re-

cases, as that of Frederick the Great, the man might console himself by the thought that the hand which struck him was the hand of an able master; but when, as often happened under the two successors of Frederick the Great, for instance, the cane of German state paternalism was handled by a royal booby, a grand ducal knave, or a margravian ruffian, then the German subject had to apply for consolation—and he did it too—to the philosophical turn of mind which characterized him. How useful this philosophical turn of mind was to the comfort of the German subject, if not to his political development, is what we shall have occasion to notice here.

For centuries, and until very recent times, our German subject never voted, never elected anybody; the state attended to his welfare and his wants; meetings were not allowed, and are permitted to-day only under state or police control. Nor did the public weal allow any freedom in printed utterances of any kind, in newspapers or books; nor are they allowed to-day, as we shall see; for the paternal state alone, with its agents, policemen, and judges, all selected and rewarded by it, can decide whether a new idea or a sharp criticism is detrimental or not to the public welfare. The state alone is competent to decide what children should learn; it appoints those who shall not only guide its destinies, but who shall mould into the paternal state form the brain of every man. To each member of this vast bureaucratic army the state affixes its label, and on each one stamps its trade-mark, till our German "subject" when he dies—unless he be an idiot—is lowered to his grave

cruits in the German army, is a characteristic feature of German state despotism.

with state marks, state titles, and state crosses upon him.

And just as a new kind of “honor” is established by the state—of which we shall see samples later on—a new kind of crime is invented—not the old crime of “high treason against majesty” alone, but one defined by a new statute unknown in other climes—“insult against functionaries”—under which any German may to-day be deprived of his personal liberty should he criticise an agent of the state; for the “honor” of the German officer or a German civil functionary is of a peculiar kind, intelligible to German minds alone.

An example, taken at random among many modern instances, may serve here, before we examine the system in detail, to justify this last assertion. At Carlsruhe, in 1896, one lieutenant Von Bruzewitz, wearing his uniform, plunges several times his sword—the emblem of German imperial honor—in the breast of a defenceless citizen who is sitting with two ladies, his relatives, in a public restaurant. The German officer has never seen this man before in his life, but when he rubbed his elbow against the citizen’s chair, the latter “insulted his honor” by remonstrating with a few words. The defenceless citizen, wounded and bleeding on the ground, begs for life, but the cowardly brute plunges his sword again in his breast, and, putting it back in the scabbard, exclaims, with true German military pride: “Now my honor is safe!” The matter comes before the courts; the assassin has one excuse—“he wore his uniform, and was an officer.” So, instead of being hanged, he gets off with a very mild sentence—three or four years’ confinement under military control. Then the Emperor of Germany, who has signed the sentence, takes this occasion to lecture all German officers in relation to this case: “Ger-



man officers should use their swords only when their honor has been *seriously* offended." And "honor" becomes thus in Germany, under the tuition of the paternal state, a jewel of indiscernible value, looking, on closer examination, very much like a worthless piece of highly colored German glass.

It is perhaps unnecessary to say that, notwithstanding its persistent effort to impose false standards of honor, of manhood, of dignity, of human efficiency on the people, the paternal state has not succeeded in Germany any more than in France in destroying certain innate virtues. In Germany much of the good work of Luther has remained ; some qualities of the German middle and lower classes are proverbial ; they either are born in the old Germanic heart, or they are the result of Luther's teachings and his doctrine of individual responsibility to God and to one's conscience, not to a church and pope. In the scientific or philosophic domain the state did not interfere, having no interest in asserting its omnipotence there ; nor was it to the state's advantage to interfere with the German conscience in Protestant Germany, when the state itself was in opposition to certain Catholic rulers. One may almost say that wherever the state's authority did not pervert the German mind, a healthy development took place in individual man. But wherever the German state, in the exercise of its assumed paternal functions, deemed it a duty to substitute its perverting official influence for the normal standards of the people, moral and political diseases ensued, and nowhere have such paternal functions been more extended than in Germany. The growth of the disease was evidenced by the utter collapse of Prussia eight years after the death of her greatest ruler, when French republican superiority wrested from her the German

Rhine Provinces. It was evidenced by Prussia's political death in 1805, due to the incapacity of the paternal state, and by the growth of modern socialism—that reaction against German state despotism—with which the modern German state is engaged in a life-and-death struggle, losing more ground every year as the election returns show. Just as the French paternal state, notwithstanding its follies and crimes, never succeeded in eradicating from the people at large those private virtues which have saved France from complete annihilation—industry and thrift, for instance, and financial honesty—so has the state in Germany never been able, with all its past and present despotism, to destroy in the masses certain traditional qualities rightly considered abroad as highly commendable. In fact, these very virtues, developed in French and German family homes in spite of state interference, in spite of the government, have been the only recuperating force. When the paternal state collapsed, as it did twice in Germany during the last hundred years, first before the French republic, then before Napoleon's imperial armies, or as it did in France after Waterloo and Sedan, the private virtues of the people, the individual patient fortitude and common-sense, so much despised by the paternal state when it sat in all its glory high above the people, became the only known forces to redeem the national independence and put the paternal state again on its legs.

It is doubtful whether any leading class in Europe ever reached a lower step of degradation than the German nobility and the German political rulers in the eighteenth century; and it is doubtful also whether any nation of Caucasian race ever showed a more servile attitude towards its upper class than the German people showed towards the petty Neros, Caligulas, and the Louis Fifteenth

who governed Germany during all that century; for German aristocracy was not only ridiculous, extravagant, and stupid, like its Versailles prototype, but it was, besides, inhuman and cruel, which French aristocracy never was. We here relinquish the pen to a truthful and conscientious German historian. Unable to quote all authorities, we find in Menzel's *History of the Last One Hundred and Twenty Years* a fairly concise and unprejudiced account, which fully agrees with all other German descriptions of those times:

“The German princes, even those of the clergy, had already copied the example of Louis XV. They were extravagant in their pomp, had built everywhere new residences and palaces, new opera-houses and theatres; they kept many mistresses, had surrounded themselves with a corrupt nobility, and they wasted the revenues of the country, the hard-earned product of their subjects' labor. Courts and noblemen read only French novels, and they had imported Parisian depravity and Parisian cynicism. This poison had also invaded the Berlin court after the death of Frederick the Great. . . . The nephew and successor of the latter, Frederick William, did not resemble his uncle in the least; he had more flesh than mind. Nothing characterizes him better than the fact reported by Ségur, the French ambassador, who says that in 1778, at the time when his uncle was fighting against Austria, he borrowed from the latter one million thalers to be able to defray his excesses. Already as a prince he had been wedded twice, once to Elizabeth of Brunswick, from whom he was divorced, then to the Princess Louise of Hesse-Darmstadt, whom he neglected because she was too virtuous. His society was formed by his mistresses and people of low education. When he succeeded Frederick the Great, under

the name of King Frederick William II., he found seventy millions of thalers in the treasury and an excellent army of two hundred thousand men. But, instead of imitating his uncle's economy, he acted like those foolish sons of rich fathers who are always in haste to divide their estate among their female and their male friends. . . . Among the women who influenced most of his actions was, in the first place, Wilhelmina Encke, the daughter of a cornet-player, a handsome blonde of very low instincts, who was the wife of his steward Rietz. She became the Prussian Pompadour and received the title of Countess of Lichtenau. She resembled also the Pompadour in retaining her influence to the death of the king. Like Louis XV., he made her sit with the queen at court, so overdressed and laden with jewels that she eclipsed the latter. His second mistress was a Countess Voss, of very high nobility. She was made a Countess of Ingenheim, but, according to Ségur, it was not she, but his third mistress, the Countess Donhof, who succeeded in being married 'on the left hand' to him. So that, besides the queen, the king had another wife married to him by the church; then he had his official mistress, the Lichtenau, without counting all his other female favorites—the actress Schulski, for instance, for whom, like a Louis XV., he gave feasts in his park at Potsdam. Among the companions of pleasure of the king, General Bischoffswerder had the foremost position. As he had neither merit nor capacity whatever, he would have played only a secondary rôle as a mere broker for women, if he had not contrived to control the king at the same time by his claims to be a 'magician.' On the recommendation of such people, the King of Prussia gave patents of nobility, crosses, sums of money, estates by wholesale, to the most unworthy people in the



country. It was sometimes enough to apply to a footman or a maid of the woman Rietz to be made a knight, and receive an estate with the title. This nobility, which counted in its ranks twenty-three new dynasties of counts, was sarcastically called the 'Eighty-six.' The corruption of the court had infected all the nobility, and especially the officers. The officers of the Guard of Berlin acquired in this respect the worst reputation. Mistresses openly kept, seductions, adulteries, gambling for high stakes, debts, drink, contempt of all domestic virtues and good habits, were alone fashionable. So that there was not much difference between the Berlin court of Frederick William II. and the French court of Louis XV."

This Prussian ruler was the grandfather of the late Emperor William, a fact which shows how "uneven" the qualities of the Hohenzollern family, the incarnate representative of state paternalism, appear in history.

At that time the Bavarian court received subsidies from France, having been bought off by Versailles. Hanover had been bribed by England. All the German states were ruled, as Menzel says, "by parasites who had sprung out of the old decayed trunk of the Holy Roman Empire."

Commenting upon the degradation reached in Germany at that time, another well-known German historian expresses himself as follows :

"The civilization of the eighteenth century resembled very much that of the previous century. In all the upper circles the French language and French manners gave the tone. French adventurers of low extraction, of no character or merit, were preferred for all important administrative or courtly offices to able Germans. In all the smaller courts superfluity of offices was the rule. Every petty



state sovereignty asserted itself by external pomp. All the German princes copied, without sense or conscience, the buildings, festivities, and parks of Versailles. The French method of allowing mistresses to rule the land was established in Dresden, in Warsaw, in Heidelberg, in Stuttgart, in Anspach, almost in every state of Germany. The Russian favoritism at St. Petersburg was not more extravagant nor shameful.”\*

“The people,” says Menzel, “was everywhere preserving, in its passiveness and humility, many virtues inherited from their ancestors; but the upper and educated classes of Germany had lost all those virtues. If the historian is compelled to record the worthlessness of the German princes and of the German nobility, he must also point out that the millions who were so badly governed, and on whom the state was trying to impose the depraved and foolish standards of foreign schools and literature, had nevertheless preserved the old religious faith, the old industry, and the old fidelity. Generally speaking, Paris was the sun, during all the eighteenth century, around which the petty courts and the nobility of Germany revolved. They looked to that sun for all life and light. To have gone at least once to Paris was indispensable to any one who pretended to be fashionable; but at home also everything was French, even the language. They had French maids for their children, French governesses and teachers, French fencing and dancing masters. They wore only French dresses, and they sent to Paris and Lyons enormous sums extorted from the people to pay for all kinds of articles of fashion. They had only French cooks and French hair-dressers.

\* Becker. *Weltgeschichte, neu bearbeitet von Wilhelm Müller*. Stuttgart, 1886, Vol. VII., p. 295.

No court could get along without its Italian opera and its French ballet, with pretty Italian or French girls, who were generally the mistresses of the princes, of the courtiers, and of the noblemen."

It never yet has struck our worthy German professors, who seldom tire of reproaching France for her corrupting influence, that German innate servility and apathetic submissiveness to their state were the prime causes of this abject degradation. When the paternal state in Prussia, for instance, is represented by a Frederick the Great, our Prussians do wonders; when represented by his two successors, political stupidity and demoralization are supreme. We are beaten by the raw recruits of republican France. Our Prussian officers surrender forts and provinces with unparalleled knavery, without the faintest conception of what the word "duty" means. Breslau, Erfurt, Stettin, Spandau, and other strong places surrender to French generals who lack artillery to make a siege. They surrender even, as we shall see, to French cavalry—a most remarkable event in any country's war annals—for the paternal state is everything in Germany, and after it crumbles down by its own folly, being so top-heavy, who can build it up again, if there are only subjects, and no citizens, in the land? In fact, whether France conquers or not, whether she can reduce all Germany to poverty and slavery, or whether she is stopped in her mad career, depends entirely on our paternal state. Under a Frederick the Great or a Moltke, with the French paternal state governed by inferior men, Germany can exist; under others, Frenchmen being led by a Dumouriez, a Pichegru, a Hoche, or a Bonaparte, the stream of political prosperity runs quite the other way; and with so much rapidity sometimes, as in 1806, that German geog-

raphy ceased for some years to be a possible science, depending, as it did, merely on the caprices of one man in Paris, so that at certain times even the omniscient Prussian state does not know what its next boundary will be, and not one German in ten can tell whose subject he will be next year.

Just as the Catholic Church and its popes decide for mankind what is useful or detrimental to spiritual welfare, so the German state and its bureaucracy decide what is necessary to their subjects' temporal redemption.

To what degradation political apathy and political worthlessness will lead a country, can be seen by the following glimpses at the results of German education—the famous German *Bildung* of which one hears so much—at the end of the last century. We shall see later what they are to-day.

In Saxony the Prince Elector had turned Catholic to become King of Poland. “He copied Louis XIV.,” says our German historian, “ordering extravagant buildings and festivities, and inflicting on the nation all the evils resulting from the government of mistresses. He expended fabulous sums and oppressed poor loyal Saxony to the utmost. His son was more sober, but since 1746 he had handed over the government to Count Brühl, his favorite, whose name has remained attached to the ‘Dresden Terrace.’ The latter was a courtier, who lived more extravagantly than even his master, and who, in order to raise money for his follies, exhausted all the resources of the country, drained all the state treasuries, even the treasury of the state orphan asylums, and imposed forced loans. Brühl ordered all his wardrobe—hundreds of suits and wigs—and even dishes, from Paris, following in everything the tastes of Augustus II., who accepted no other standard but Versailles. This

taste descended unhappily to the burgher class through the courtiers and poets. Professor Gottsched, who, as a literary man, a critic, and a playwright, then imposed rules on all Germany, allowed no other taste but French taste ; he destroyed the national popular stage, had the national Punch (*Hanswurst*) solemnly burned in effigy, and allowed only classical French pieces. . . . The light and lascivious French novels had permeated from court and nobility through all the middle-class. Everybody in Leipsic prided himself on behaving as lightly, as gracefully, as courteously as in Paris ; the German maids of Leipsic became perfect French *grisettes*. The moral degradation of Leipsic, in the middle of the last century, can be seen in the contemporary publications in that city, all full of scandals and gossip ; or in the poems of Corvinus, Celander, Henrici, Von Böhlau, Rost, Wiese, and others.”\*

In Bavaria, the country had been governed in the most shameful manner, first under Max Emmanuel, then under Charles Albert. At the latter's death, in 1746, his son, Max Joseph, succeeded as ruler ; he was weak-minded, and allowed the Jesuits to govern as they pleased. Thanks to paternal misrule, the people had become so miserably poor that a peasant, one Thierriegel, led an emigration of ten thousand Bavarians to Spain in 1746, to whom the Spanish Count Olavides gave waste lands in the Sierra Morena.

In 1790 Charles Theodore, ruler of Bavaria, ordered the city council of Munich to kneel before his portrait and beg pardon in that attitude for having advised the citizens not to present an address of thanks to the prince, alleging that they alone should do it. Another

\* Menzel. *History of the Last One Hundred and Twenty Years.*



of that same family, Prince Charles, who was educated by the French Abbé Jalabert, and reigned in the principality of Rhenish Bavaria, reminds one of Nero. He bit off the finger of a lady of the court one day, because he hated her. Another day, as his cook had failed in the preparation of a dish, he had him brought before him, ordered the servants to undress him, made him stand naked, and then had alcohol poured on him and ignited. They managed to save the poor man's life, but he became insane. He did the same thing to his secretary, whose life they managed to save by burying him in a pile of manure. He built a palace in imitation of Versailles, which cost fourteen millions of florins, and he compelled every German who passed by to take off his hat and salute his residence. He lived there with the wife of his leading adviser, a woman named Von Eisenbeck, his Pompadour, and converted all the country into a game preserve. He had six hundred dogs; with them and his hunters he hunted up all the pretty girls of the country, and kept them for two weeks as night companions for himself and his hunters. This monster died at last in 1795; not expelled by German subjects, but expelled by a French army of the republic.

In 1776 "Landgraf" Frederick II., ruler of Hesse, sold twelve thousand of his male subjects to England to fight against the American colonies. The English agents bought the people in the market, like cattle, at the rate of one hundred thalers apiece (seventy-five dollars). Then he sold again a herd of twelve thousand, and later on another herd of ten thousand more; the whole country had only four hundred thousand inhabitants. Whoever made any trouble was tied up and beaten with clubs till he submitted. If the father and mother complained, the father was put in irons and the wife sen-



tenced to hard labor. Among these white slaves was Senme, celebrated afterwards as a writer, who says in the history of his life: "Nobody was safe from this trader in souls. . . . They tore off my academical certificate to prevent anybody identifying me." He had to fight against the United States, he who was an advanced liberal all his life. The next prince, William IX., continued this trade; the last four thousand subjects were sold to go to the English colonies.

At Darmstadt, Louis IX. ascended the throne of his father in 1768, and moved his residence to Pirmasens, a town in the hills across the Rhine; there he "played soldier" against all rules of common-sense, with the utmost inhumanity and cruelty—like most German rulers of these times. In that town, which he surrounded with walls, he gathered all the tallest men he could find in Germany; there were nine thousand male inhabitants, of whom six thousand eight hundred and fifty were soldiers; and he converted the town into a human stud-farm in order to have children who should be tall like their fathers. There was a soldier for every inhabitant's daughter, but they were allowed to marry if they chose. All had to remain there for life. He drilled the soldiers every day in a hall large enough for his whole army; he heated it in winter with twenty-two stoves. The new variety of human beings which he tried to create has degenerated since, but the popular expression has remained among the peasants of the Rhenish Palatinate: "There goes a Pirmasens girl," whenever they see a tall girl.

In Würtemberg matters were worse yet. There a young ruffian—a pupil of Frederick the Great, however—occupied the throne from 1744 till he became an old man in 1793. He began to reign at the age of seventeen, and with his friends, among whom was a Count

## OLD GERMANY

Pappenheim, he persecuted all young girls, and became the terror of the land. During a ball he committed a rape on the daughter of one Vollstaedt, a court councillor ; he shut up once a whole company of ladies all night in the palace, where they had been invited to a party. During the Seven Years' War he declared against his benefactor, Frederick the Great, but ran away at Fulda. He maltreated the soldiers in his dukedom, but he issued a decree that every subject should take off his hat when passing near one. The privy councillor Stralin, of Stuttgart, once forgot to do so before a sentry, and he received twenty-five lashes. He kept a large harem, sent for Vestris, the dancer, from Paris ; he had great hunts at his celebrated country residence, "Solitude," where he kept a second harem composed of pretty country girls, whom his hunters had orders to bring to him for inspection, whenever they saw one.

In Brunswick, Duke Karl, who reigned since 1735, and who had married a sister of Frederick the Great, led such an extravagant life, keeping an opera, ballet girls, etc., that, in order to raise funds, he sold his subjects to England. His successor, Ferdinand, also sold four thousand of them, having not money enough for all his women.

All these facts are recorded by German historians themselves, and no German professor has ever denied one of them ; on the contrary, they are to be found in all German works where details are given in relation to the last century's German civilization.

"But the greatest shame of Germany," says one of them already quoted above, "was the conduct of the princes who were dignitaries of the Catholic Church ; for all the French corruption had invaded the clergy. The archbishops and bishops had built great castles and

palaces; they kept a court with mistresses, operas, ballets, and hunts, just the same as the temporal rulers. At Mainz, the archbishop, Joseph von Erthal, had sixty chamberlains and twelve generals, and he went about always surrounded by his women, to whom he had given classical names: Aspasia, Lais, Phryne, Danaë, Kratonia, etc. In Cologne, the archbishop, having no more money, although he had taken everything away from the people, surrendered himself to a Jew, one Baruch, and he issued bad coin and debased the currency. In Trier the prince-bishop, in Salzburg the archbishop, in Passau the bishop, followed the general rule. Even the convents of the nuns had large wine-cellar.

We stop looking further into these records. Such was the condition of Germany, and the facts nobody denies. Evidently Germany had reached a lower degree of degradation than France, for this degradation had a character of brutality and cruelty unknown at Versailles; and, what is worse yet, the German nation remained perfectly indifferent and passive before the vilest methods of government which Europe ever saw.

"The corruption came from France." This is the excuse given by all German professors. A paltry excuse for learned professors, who extol, at all times, German honor, German self-respect, German dignity, German state methods, and that famous German *Bildung*, or training, of which we hear so much. The point to which German *Bildung* led the German nation is, happily for the world, one that no barbarous—*ungebildet*—American or Briton cares to reach.

The phenomenon of German degradation explains itself to "barbarous" Anglo-Saxons, so despised to this day in "cultured" German official circles; but the explanation is quite different from that laid down by

learned German professors. The German nation had reached such an abject condition, because for centuries it had lost all sense of freedom and political dignity. At all times and to this day the German state, with its complicated erudition, has never educated gentlemen, only functionaries of all kinds. Its object is not to make a man, but an officer, a soldier, a German mandarin, or a politically worthless subject. The reader can form an opinion of the present state methods employed to maintain German militarism, as revealed by many recent court trials, in the following chapter, where he will have to wade through details of military education hardly more edifying, considering the times, than the German civilization of the eighteenth century. Germany had fallen so low because the paternal German state had always substituted, as it does to-day, false standards of dignity and honor for true ones. These false standards, acting like an anæsthetic drug on a subject's moral feelings, make him indifferent to all the indignities, the insults, heaped upon his head by his superior, and indifferent to the indignities that he himself heaps upon the head of his inferior. With its state titles and decorations, state dignities, and state candlesticks *à la* Louis XIV., its state courts of honor obliging a man to fight a duel, and other state courts forbidding him to fight one; with its state education depriving a man of any other ideal in life but a military uniform, a bureaucratic post, a patent of nobility, a decoration, or a pension, or the right to be called "Excellency"—with all these features the German paternal state as a moral educator or civilizing agent is a signal failure. All the present vices and ills of modern Germany are traceable to the despotism of its civil popery. None of the fine qualities and domestic virtues of



its middle and lower classes emanate from it. They exist in spite of it, and were not acquired in barracks, nor by state examinations and state drill, nor by state prosecution of every heretic opinion.

The facts speak for themselves. When Frederick the Great died Prussia was the strongest military power of the European continent. Its treasury was full; its civil organization and administration were perfect, at least according to German standards. No machinery of state was ever in better working order; never were its pieces more carefully selected, more fitting, more sound. Its performance was so well calculated that it may be said, without exaggeration, never to have been equalled. And, in spite of this, what were the immediate results? Let us look at this most instructive period of German history.

At their first contact with the badly drilled, untrained, but fanatic soldiers of the French Republic at Valmy, at Jemmapes, at Fleurus, at Wattignies, and other places, the German leaders appear to be incompetent. The highly disciplined German troops, fresh from the Seven Years' War, are beaten and repulsed. And this inferiority lasts as long as the German nation allows its leaders to follow their traditional policy—to the day when the nation, aroused at last from its passiveness and apathy by the suffering it endures, with new leaders like Stein, Blücher, Gneisenau, York, and other able men, be they soldiers, be they poets, at last rescues Germany from foreign rule and oppression. Here three characteristic facts appear. In the first place, Germany is already defeated, and compelled to abandon part of its territory by the treaty of Basel before Bonaparte has taken a hand in the struggle. Eight years have hardly elapsed since Frederick the Great closed his eyes, and Prussia's ag-



gression, all Germany's aggression, has ended in disaster. The German armies are driven not only from French soil, but from Belgium and Holland, even from the left bank of the Rhine, which remains in French hands for almost twenty years. The weakness of the Prussian and German state methods is thus already demonstrated before Napoleon's appearance, for these methods had a practical value only on the express condition that they be applied by an extraordinary genius, by a Frederick the Great. The methods of German state paternalism—bureaucratic efficiency, military drill, and state omnipotence—have all remained intact; but, like tools in the hands of an incompetent artisan, they produce now more harm than good, for the competent mechanic who alone could use them has departed forever.

Then, in the second place, when the paternal state collapses, its ruin is so complete—hardly one Prussian functionary in ten having manhood and sense enough to perform his duty—that when Jena comes, Prussia, the most perfect state machine on earth, literally falls to pieces. The paternal king and his bureaucracy lie prostrate, helpless, in the most humiliating attitude before the Corsican despot. That haughty pride, so characteristic of Prussian state officers and dignitaries, is all gone; these very men so brutal and rude towards their own people, so much so that a dignitary never addresses a subject except by using the third person—*he* instead of *you*—now stand, or rather lie, abjectly before their French masters, who treat them with the utmost contempt, not much better than Prussian subjects.

Finally, when after years of misery, hunger, and disasters, the German nation emerges at last from its traditional lethargy, none of the men who were at the helm before the national ruin are of any service whatever.

On the contrary, their lack of manhood, of dignity, and energy continually handicaps the national outbreak. They never believed in the people. The King of Saxony hid himself in the cellars of his palace during the battle of Leipsic, and thought the defeat of the French incredible. Most of the rulers, like him, have no faith in German rebellion; but they plead meekly in Paris for themselves and their dynastic interests—the King of Prussia with the others.

These different facts show conclusively the impotence of “omnipotent” state, and the worthlessness of “official Germany” in a crisis when the pilot at the helm, the one man who steers the whole machine, does not happen to be an extraordinary genius. The same tools used by a Frederick the Great or a Bismarck fail when handled by ordinary men; just as military France collapses under Napoleon III., after having conquered all Europe under Napoleon I.

During the winter of 1805–1806 alone, if official records are correct, five thousand seven hundred and twelve Prussian soldiers deserted from the ranks, notwithstanding stern discipline and regulations. Hardly twenty years had elapsed since the death of Frederick the Great, in 1786, and the Prussian system, which was then already a century old, had not been disturbed by internal dissensions or “unforeseen accidents.” No country apparently had more order, more safeguards against disasters of all kinds; the state, with its piercing eye, its complete and perfect bureaucracy, its untiring vigilance, prying into every man’s house, from the court councillor’s to the humble peasant’s, in order to correct, to improve, to consolidate, to teach, to compel, or even to recreate mankind; prying into every man’s concerns in order to prevent danger, to avert evils, to redress and

straighten up everything—even the backbone of its subjects, the drill sergeant teaching them how to walk according to standard.

At Jena, before the battle has begun, when Napoleon contemplates the position of the Prussian army and sees how easily he can outgeneral their leaders—"The Prussians," says he, "are still more stupid than the Austrians"; not a flattering remark, coming from such a good judge of men, on the most perfectly drilled and trained nation of Europe. They have allowed him during the night to make a road, to cut trees, to drag artillery to the top of a steep hill—the Landgrafenberg—and when the day begins, the issue of the battle is a foregone conclusion for all except the Prussian staff and commanders. Ten thousand Prussians and Saxons killed and eighteen thousand prisoners are the result; but the retreat is even worse than the battle. The old Marshal von Möllendorf, a general of Frederick the Great, who once won a victory over the French at Kaiserslautern, becomes frightened out of his wits, and surrenders one hundred and twenty guns and four thousand men without firing a shot; to the great indignation of a gallant young lieutenant, one Hellwitz, who with fifty cavalymen breaks through the French troops, sets free four thousand Prussian prisoners, scatters their escort of five hundred French soldiers, and escapes with his men. The next day Bernadotte surprises the Duke of Würtemberg, kills two thousand five hundred German soldiers, makes five thousand prisoners, and takes twenty-two guns.

The King of Prussia, the military and bureaucratic pope of the most military and bureaucratic state of the European continent, is now running fast, first to Berlin; then, as the French still advance, to the east of Berlin,

then farther and farther east. History has never seen a more complete wreck of a state, of its power, and energy; and the state being wrecked in this one day's struggle, the nation is now lost. The ship of state has foundered with all on board, being an inelastic, heavy, unyielding hulk of iron to which one single blow is an irreparable disaster. How different from a buoyant craft like the old Roman commonwealth, whose senate could serenely thank a defeated general for having "not despaired of the republic"!

The French advance rapidly; and before them all the strongly fortified towns surrender, most of them without firing a shot. "To the sad spectacle of wholesale surrenders in the open field," says our German historian, "succeeded a sadder one yet: *the cowardly surrender of almost all the Prussian fortresses.*"\*

Let us observe here another characteristic fact. All these Prussian strongholds have been equipped by the paternal state in the most admirable manner; for the Prussian government is never caught, like some of its neighbors, neglecting its paternal duties. The Prussian state is always vigilant, omniscient, and ubiquitous in its solicitude; so that it has provided these many fortresses with every conceivable resource. Competent state functionaries have made excellent walls and deep ditches at the very place where they should be; plenty of magnificent guns are at hand—a manufactured article in which to this day the Prussian state shows its wonderful superiority—with all necessary ammunition; there is always plenty of food for garrisons, and plenty of strong, healthy, well-trained soldiers who can move like clock-work; all the officers belong to the military "Yunker"

\* Menzel. Vol. III.



class, having been selected from a caste which passes at all times as the strongest support of the state. The tutelary Prussian state has provided all these things; only one thing has been forgotten, which is the most important of all: to have real men, not mere Prussian state functionaries, clothed in those Prussian uniforms. Personally, they may have courage enough to protect what Prussia calls their honor, by fighting a duel; but their dignity and manhood do not go further, and they do not feel at all under the necessity of standing like heroes before French bayonets. To save Prussia is the state's business; superior authority, not a subordinate commander, must fight Napoleon. Fight for the nation? "My dear sir, there is no Prussian nation, only a Prussian state intrusted by God with the necessary authority to regulate every subject's thoughts and acts, and so wise that it knows better than anybody else what should be done in this case."

This doctrine will have to be somewhat changed in Prussia during this century, for the people, having at last become tired of being governed by paternal broomstick, makes open revolt in 1848; and it is only after Prussia stops looking with contempt on the national wishes and aims of the German fatherland that Bismarck and Moltke can lead its king to Versailles, there to be crowned German Emperor.

But so far there is no sign that a German nation exists, and the Prussian state has suddenly collapsed, like the Austrian, the Bavarian, the Saxon, and all the other states. Prussian majesty, a rather weak, undecided, incapable king, retreats all the time, with his queen in tears, keeping always at a safe distance from the French tide, till he reaches the farthest end of his realm, where he hopes to be rescued from annihilation by his imperial

brother, the Czar, and a Russian army. After Erfurt, Berlin, and Spandau have opened their gates, Stettin falls, shamefully surrendered by General von Romberg ; then Küstrin, all surrounded by water and marshes, almost impregnable, except for the fact that one Prussian general, Von Ingersleben, is in command. He is the man who surrenders to a body of French cavalry—an almost incredible performance, as we have already remarked, were it not mentioned with patriotic indignation by German historians, and also proved by the records. A few days before this surrender, Prussian majesty visited this noble commander and recommended him to hold the place. Old Kleist surrenders Magdeburg with twenty-two thousand soldiers, although the place is one of the strongest and best-equipped in the kingdom. He surrenders to Ney, who has only ten thousand men and not a single siege gun. “This,” says Menzel, “was the most shameful surrender, and everywhere the officers stipulated as a condition that they should go free on parole, and should have the privilege of removing their baggage ; otherwise not one of them ever objected to a surrender.” Which latter remark of the German historian seems rather superfluous, for, according to German state gospel, “Obedience is the first duty of the German subject”—a precept admitted to this day.

Hameln, Plassenburg, Nienburg fall almost without a struggle ; then Glogau, although the French have again no siege guns ; but the Prussian commander there has safely preserved for the enemy all his heavy guns, so that now, when they need some, they will use these Prussian cannon, so remarkably well made by the government. The French general Vandamme plunders all the country, both he and his men stealing silverware ; and, strange to say, according to German authorities, the greatest

plunderers are German soldiers serving in the French army, some regiments raised on the Rhine by Napoleon, and the Würtembergers, more especially the corps called "Black Jägers." "Never," says Menzel, "had the German been more brutal to Germans, except during our wars of religion, and never did France find in Germany better tools to dishonor the country."

Vandamme appears now before Breslau with the Prussian guns he has taken in Glogau. "Here General von Thiele is in command, and with him is the inspector-general of all the fortresses of Silesia, one Lindner. During the first days the citizens had taken up arms, but their weapons were removed by the authorities for fear they might defend Breslau." The commanders surrender, but at last, to the great scandal of the paternal Prussian state and to the eternal glory of German men, "the soldiers were furious, refused obedience, and insulted the officers." Here, at last, obedience to superior authority ceases to be the prime virtue of German hearts!—a sad phenomenon, according to Prussian state standards, but the first refreshing manifestation of German dignity, so far, in this ignoble Prussian epic. The French find here two hundred and fifty guns—a fact which speaks well again for Prussian tutelary vigilance. They impose on the city a war contribution of eighteen millions of francs—about twelve millions of dollars in American money, if we calculate the greater value of coin at that time. Vandamme then takes the two fortresses of Brieg and Schweidnitz. "The commanding officer there," says our German historian, "was the most brutal and stupid officer of the Prussian army—a man who used to beat the soldiers shockingly, who had neither intelligence nor honor, and who, after only three days of siege, surrendered with two hundred and

forty-nine guns, two thousand men, and an immense stock of war material. He had asked favorable conditions only for himself and all his officers."

The best-organized state of Europe is thus completely conquered in less than four months—a fact hardly paralleled by that less shameful defeat when a similar military and bureaucratic government breaks down at Sedan after three or four battles, abandoning a disorganized nation to the mercy of the conquering army. In both cases the fate of the people is in the hands of its government, which has absorbed all its vitality and strength and paralyzed all its energies.

In money alone the Prussian subjects had to pay seven hundred million francs to France as a war indemnity—a very large sum in those times, for Prussian subjects were not rich. Only the influence of Alexander, the Russian Czar, who concluded to make peace at Tilsit after his defeat at Friedland, prevented Napoleon from wiping Prussia and its paternal state off the map of Europe. But happily the political doctrine responsible for this collapse had not quite succeeded in reducing the people to that extreme point of political inertia which is the highest ideal of official Germany. Men will remain human beings even if tied hand and foot, and they will always try to throw off their fetters and to loosen their bonds. All the German princes, however, now made themselves conspicuous by their servility towards Napoleon; at Weimar, the latter, sitting with the Czar in a box at the theatre, could look down from his seat upon *un parterre de princes allemands*. "That is only a German prince, you blockhead!" says a French officer to a sentry who by mistake saluted a German grand duke as if he were a French general. They all crave favors from Paris, express their devotion



or friendly feelings to the master, and their admiration for his acts. German princes and German nobility, more contemptible at that time than even Versailles aristocracy, are wonderful to behold; they lick the hand that has throttled their people and that smites their own face.

The people alone shows any dignity; its indignation grows; and the more it forgets its rôle of German subject, the more it recovers gradually the habit of thinking and deciding for itself. In obedience to French orders, the King of Prussia has closed German markets to the ships of England—the only nation that has preserved its vitality and is fighting against France; and England retaliates against the Prussian King by destroying German ships. As usual, the nation must pay for the knavery of its rulers. Frederick William humbly begs as a favor from his master not to be reduced to the rôle of a simple German duke; he has fallen so low that Stein, the only Prussian statesman who tries vainly to infuse some energy into this king, is compelled to leave Germany and take refuge at the Russian court. The people has now neither money nor bread; the French have taken what was left. The paternal state, crumbling like a rotten plank under their feet, has hurled them into the abyss. But since all these princes, all these noblemen, functionaries, dignitaries, and bureaucrats of all kinds have abandoned them to their fate, the German burghers and peasants, for the first time since Martin Luther, have now an opinion of their own, and they begin to express it openly. They are the only ones who have not completely surrendered, body and soul; they literally compel some of these princes to march with, or rather behind them. “The misery was great,” says the German chronicler, “but the people were mad and wanted to fight. Napoleon had so exhausted the land,

and the people had been so much deprived of the necessities of life, that every one was glad to have at least a piece of steel in his fist."

This is really the only bright page in German history. The nation was too much degenerated under German state rule to reconquer alone its independence; it had been unable to maintain the Reformation of Luther without the assistance of Gustavus Adolphus and his Swedish armies; it was too weak, too devoid of political energy and civic virtues to expel the French ruler without foreign aid; but now under new leadership the nation rises at last. Its leaders were Blücher, formerly cashiered when a major by Prussian authority; Gneisenau, formerly sold by his prince with other German slaves to fight in the English ranks against the Americans; and York, who had been compelled to serve in the Dutch colonies as a private soldier. Prussian majesty, having vainly tried by submissiveness to appease his French master, now as a last hope makes an "appeal to his people." He has first tried everything else; and he does this only because there is nothing else to do. Many German princes and noblemen—like the King of Saxony and the Rhenish nobility—are fighting their own countrymen. During the battle of Leipsic the Saxon regiments, compelled by their paternal government to fight for Napoleon, desert on the battle-field and go over to the national army; here, again, "obedience to the state" ceasing to be considered by many thousand Saxons as their first duty on earth. The German army enters Leipsic and the King of Saxony is taken; the man should have been hanged as a traitor, but his royal and princely colleagues send him to Berlin, with all due honors, and he is at once released. On the march to Paris, the German princes are so incompetent, timorous,

## OLD GERMANY

and slow that Blücher's rage explodes continually; he crosses the Rhine almost against orders, and literally compels his Prussian King to follow. He and York arrived before Paris with their half-starved and half-frozen men; Blücher's indignation was so great at one time that against superior orders he refused to wait for "that hound," as he called Bernadotte, who had become King of Sweden and the ally of Prussian majesty. When Prussian majesty arrives at last before Paris, Blücher requests his king to show himself to the troops, who have marched and fought all winter, following the French from Russia to Paris with worn-out boots, torn uniforms, and many unhealed wounds. Royal Prussian majesty at last deigns to take a look at them, and with truly royal Prussian intellect he sees only one thing: that his soldiers do not look at all like real Prussian soldiers, being untidy, unkempt, and not up to state regulations and standards. Consequently he turns away with displeasure on his face, telling Blücher that "They look awfully bad."

When the struggle is over, Germany continues to live in political bondage, although France has received a constitution under English and Russian prescription; and the old paternal German state despotism continues to reign supreme in the land till 1848, when open revolt takes place.

## CHAPTER IX

### MODERN GERMANY

SPEAKING of the political programme of the French Jacobins, and of the consequences of their deadly doctrine, Taine expresses himself as follows :

“By logical deductions they reduce the dimensions of individual man; then they work to fit the real man to those dimensions. The state interferes in every branch of individual activity. It inspects workshops, trading operations and property, family affairs and education, religion, morals, and sentiments. It sacrifices the individuals to the state, whose omnipotence is proclaimed. Such is their programme, and none is more injurious to progress, for it undertakes to lead mankind back to a social form in which it was already once enclosed, and from which it emerged eight centuries ago. . . . And the object of the state's omnipotence is naturally to regenerate mankind, for the theory on which it bases its rights assigns at the same time its object to the state. We must now dictate to individual man his ideas, his feelings. We shall prescribe for him what he must love and believe, and we shall rebuild after a determined pattern his intelligence and his heart.” \*

\* Taine. *La Révolution*, pp. 82-121.



How France has fared under this paternal doctrine we have seen ; how modern Germany is faring under it, how growing social and political ulcers are being developed under the unhealthy pressure, the few following glimpses may partly reveal, for behind a decorative constitution, behind the prosperous manufacture of cheap imitations of English and French goods, and American machinery, there lies a most diseased state of things.

A well-regulated community it seems in the eyes of a foreign traveller, who notes its quaint features, its well-dressed and well-drilled soldiers, but a very sick community to those who study court trials and forbidden literature, who hear the half-subdued growls of the lower classes, and who watch the infatuation and short-sightedness of its military and bureaucratic caste. Without its militarism, the product of German state paternalism, the state could not exist ; but at the same time this degrading and dangerous institution, instead of infusing healthy life, is gradually hastening the decay.

Since the war of 1870, under the plea of saving the nation from renewed aggression, the old lessons received after the death of Frederick the Great have all been forgotten. "Obedience to the state," to the military and bureaucratic caste, which alone represents to-day the German state, is again proclaimed as the only foundation of social prosperity ; obedience, implicit and prompt, to the old German system, to an omnipotent state prying into every man's life, ruling over a nation of "subjects," and represented by an army of military and civil functionaries. The American reader who wishes to form his own opinion on the present results of this doctrine will have to follow the writer here in the perusal of much evidence of a very "unpicturesque" character, collected mainly in recent judiciary trials, for anybody

who wishes to examine carefully the present political and social condition of Germany is confronted immediately with peculiar difficulties.

The great care taken by the German government to suppress all evidence of the faults and crimes of its representatives leads to daily prosecutions for "offence against the state, against the emperor," or "against a state functionary."\* Imprisonment, fine, and suppression of all printed evidence being the result of such prosecutions, the press is necessarily gagged, and, as we shall now see, all attempts at publishing the atrocities committed in the German barracks, in which every able-bodied subject has to pass from one to three years of his life, are unmercifully avenged by relentless persecution. Since all the pamphlets and books in which conscientious and truly patriotic writers are calling their countrymen's attention to the growing abuses of the military and bureaucratic caste are immediately seized and suppressed, much evidence disappears. The evidence is only partially revealed before the courts when the prosecuted author proves his statements—a fact which does not save him, since his offence consists really in having told the truth. The present list of "forbidden" literature in Germany is a rather long one, and if we should extract out of this mass of books and pamphlets (most of which have led their authors to prison) all the uninteresting cases of cruelty, barbarous treatment, and torture which were publicly exposed, hundreds, nay thousands, of pages would not suffice.

Consequently we shall have to confine ourselves here

\* In the past five years 1239 persons have been sentenced in Germany to 2250 years of imprisonment for offending against the emperor personally.

to one case which might be considered a fair sample ; and in order to appreciate fully the present condition of a German "subject," we must necessarily go into all its details. We shall take the case of Mr. Herman Schöler, on account of the great thoroughness with which he has treated all the facts he asserted in his publications and in the several courts where this scandalous affair was produced.

Mr. Schöler published his first work in 1895, after he had left the army. The title of the work was : *Military Horrors. Two Years as an Infantryman.* Being immediately prosecuted for this publication, he established before the courts, by means of the military records, all the facts he had related. He was then publishing another work, *One Year's Sentence to Military "Labor,"* in which he revealed the tortures to which German subjects are submitted to-day in the kind of semi-penal institutions established for "unpatriotic" Germans. After having proved, by the very government records and papers, that he had told nothing but the truth, he was sentenced to eight months' imprisonment, and his editor to a fine of one thousand marks. But though the state persistently continued its persecutions against Mr. Schöler, it had met in the latter a terrible and irrepressible foe. Schöler collected all the evidence produced in the trial, and has now published, in 1897, a new work, *My Military Trial*, in which he gives this evidence. This is leading him now towards new troubles, for, since the first day when he began to protest, the man has been under arrest, in jail, or pleading before a court, like a great many other Germans whose notions of dignity, manhood, and honor do not agree with the official standards of modern Germany. We beg the reader to follow Mr. Schöler's brave and re-

markable struggle for freedom and right in the German empire.

Before reporting for military duty as the law required, Mr. Schöler—being then only eighteen and a half years old—had committed the imprudence of addressing a letter to the editor of a liberal newspaper, the *Freisinnige Zeitung*; and this letter having fallen into the hands of the inspector of police of his native town, the latter, by virtue of the mysterious and undefined authority which the state possesses in Germany, had invaded his rooms one morning, ransacked his bureaus and drawers, examined all his correspondence, and hunted in every corner for “forbidden literature.” The inspector had found nothing, but Mr. Schöler was not so docile as most of his countrymen, and lodged a complaint with the director of police against his subordinate, the inspector. The only apparent result of this useless step against a state functionary seems to have been that when, later on, Mr. Schöler reported for military duty, he discovered that he had been “recommended” to the military authorities as a “social democrat.”

“When I entered the regiment,” says Mr. Schöler, “I intended to do my duty fully during the two, or perhaps three, years I had to serve; and I have done it too, as is evidenced by the reports of my two company chiefs Mr. K—— and Mr. W——, who asserted in court that I was one of the best soldiers in the ranks. I was also determined to allow my superiors a wide margin of authority in all technical dealings between us; but I had also made up my mind not to stand without due protest any acts injurious to my dignity as a man, whatever the consequences might be. This, in the eyes of our degraded ‘patriotism’ may be considered as a crime against Heaven, but I believed that the young soldier,



the young citizen who fulfils his duty to his country in serving his military time, is unworthy of wearing his uniform if he allows any man to commit brutalities on him. This is the delicate point; and what shameful brutalities are committed, this is what these pages are intended to show. I know that a certain percentage of our officers are *gentlemen*, and even among non-commissioned officers I have found also respectable men; consequently my reproaches are not addressed to them as a mass. No blind zeal leads me either; and it would be absurd to make the whole officer class responsible for the sins of a number of them. I do not attack persons here; I attack the institutions."

Mr. Schöler had been serving a few weeks when his corporal—German corporals have complete charge of their men, and are responsible for them—ordered him to *scrub* one of the soldiers who had been reported as "dirty." The operation takes place with hard scrubbing-brushes and soap. Schöler objected to "scrubbing" this man. The corporal abused him at once, and, with much swearing and in a thundering voice, said: "If I did not know you, I would slap your face now, but I am too shrewd! I won't burn my fingers on you! I will catch you in some other way." The corporal reported him for insubordination.

"I had often occasion later on," says Schöler, "to reflect upon the brutalities committed by non-commissioned officers, and on the beautiful spectacle presented by a dignified representative of our monarchical institutions, with his 'king's frock' on, being kicked and beaten. And after a year I expressed my feeling to my company chief in the following words, which I repeat here to-day: '*That there are companies in which every private has been struck in the face.*' This is the digni-

fied manner in which every private in our German army is liable to be treated, no matter what excuses may be given by people who brag about our intelligence, our humanity, and our refinement.

“From the very first days of my service, I had noticed that I was looked upon in a very strange manner; as I found out later, it was because I had been secretly reported as a ‘democrat.’ But I did not know it as yet when the following incident happened: About Christmas, 1889, a letter arrived for me from a friend in Hamburg, and when the corporal showed me the letter he said ‘that he wished to read it.’ I blushed, but supposing that this man would be ashamed of himself, I handed him back the letter without opening it. I supposed that he would return it. I was mistaken; he opened the letter, read it, handed it to me, and said that I should deliver it to him later on. What were the contents? Nothing but private communications; only my friend, hoping that I could get out for the holidays, ended his note by saying, ‘I really hope that you will get out of your dungeon for a few days.’

“This was serious. When I was called before my company chief to have a talk with him about this letter, he qualified my friend as ‘an enemy of the empire.’ And from that day on, the inspection of my letters never ceased. It is true that I never delivered one so freely again; the corporals then used to order me to show the signatures. I did it a few times till, finally, I became tired of this too. One day, when the corporal handed me a letter with the order to show the signature, I refused point-blank to receive it from him on such conditions. He had to take it away, but five minutes later another officer brought it back. A moment later this man appeared again, and proceeded at once to inspect

minutely my baggage. He did not find the letter, and asked what I had done with it. I answered that I had burned it up. I shall never forget the manner in which he looked at me."

From this time on Schöler had no peace. Paternal state had declared war against him. Being continually punished, he had made up his mind to stand everything like a man, when one day he was ordered to pump water into a tank. There was a "floater" in this tank connected with a register showing the depth of the water, and a small chain attached to the floater was hanging along a post. This trifling detail, as we shall see, was destined to lead to endless proceedings against him. He and a fellow-soldier had been pumping for more than ten minutes, but the register recorded no increase of water in the tank. "The register does not work," said his comrade; "the floater must stick somewhere. Pull the chain!" Schöler pulled the chain, but the register did not move. "Pull harder!" says his comrade. Schöler does so, and the chain breaks.

The next morning Schöler is reported to the colonel as follows: "Private Schöler, of the second company, being ordered to pump water in the West Yard tank, has violently destroyed the controlling apparatus." By order of the colonel, he has to appear before the first lieutenant, who has charge of this "important case." "Did you not know that this chain was connected with the floater?" "I did." "Well, did you not know, then, that it should not be touched by you?" "I did not. I have never received any such order."

The next day he is solemnly sentenced to five days' solitary confinement for having maliciously damaged a water register in such a manner that it is now unfit for use.

Here begins a most characteristic struggle between our German "subject" and his paternal state. According to military regulations, a German private has the right to appeal, but he must first endure the penalty before he makes the appeal; consequently Schöler, after emerging from the dark hole where he has been kept on bread and water only, in company with rats, appeals from the sentence, duly notifying his corporal of this fact. Such an appeal from the sentence of the commanding officer of the regiment makes a great sensation. Schöler is summoned first before the captain, who advises him, officially, not to do it. He insists. He is then summoned before the major, who repeats, officially, the captain's advice, and adds, good-naturedly, that it is to the interest of a private not to appeal. He insists again. The matter now goes before the commander of the division, who decides "that Schöler has acknowledged his guilt, because he did not declare at once that he had no intention to break the chain." The appeal is decided against Schöler, and as he has appealed without any reason for doing so, he is sentenced to seven days' more solitary confinement. Schöler goes to prison, comes out, and appeals again.

Now, according to the regulations printed in his "Private's Handbook," he has the right to present that appeal himself in writing, or to ask the captain to write down a statement of the grievance. Schöler writes six pages, but the captain insists that he himself must write the statement. After a long struggle on this point, Schöler's own statement is annexed to the captain's report. In this appeal, Schöler—taking the ground that in common law, unless the evidence of intention is given, no man can be sentenced for having committed a crime or a misdemeanor; and that there is no evidence whatever



that he intentionally broke the chain—on the contrary—asks that the sentence *he has already served* be declared null and void.

“The result?” says Schöler. “I was sentenced now to fourteen days more; and let the reader hear the reasons. The sentence states: ‘It is true that no intention has been proved, but it is also true that Schöler cannot prove the contrary, and the penalty of five days’ solitary confinement was really mild, considering Schöler’s disobedience.—Signed, BRONSART VON SCHELLEN-DORF, Secretary of War.’”

He is now shut in for fourteen days on bread and water, without a fire, in bitter January weather, in a den where the water oozes out from the damp walls more than three feet below ground; and from this day his legs are subject to attacks of rheumatism, “from which he has to suffer while writing his book at the age of twenty-six.”

As soon as this ordeal is over Schöler appeals again. This time to the emperor himself, and he makes an additional complaint against the Secretary of War. He signs the document, writing before his name, as he must do: *Allerunterthänigster*; which word, destined to describe a qualification special to Germans alone, cannot be translated in the English language, for the qualification has never existed among English-speaking people. It means something like: “Your most *subjected* subject.” Observe that Schöler has had in his favor all the time the evidence of his comrade, who has declared during all these proceedings “that, in his opinion, Schöler meant only to pull the chain to try the register, not to break the chain.” Schöler adds in his complaint to the emperor, “that it is the duty of his accusers to prove his bad intention, not his duty to prove his innocence . . . although he has done this also.”

The imperial answer arrives at last in the form of a cabinet decree, stating that the complaint has not been presented according to military regulations, which require that an officer should write the complaint. This is in contradiction to the regulations printed in the "Private's Handbook," of which the state gives a copy to every soldier. The "Handbook" must be wrong. So the appeal has to be written up again, this time by an officer, the company chief, who is a mortal enemy of Schöler, and who refuses to write down the words he dictates; the officer swears "that this remark is not to the point," that "such a word cannot be written down," "that it is a private's duty to be modest *and not to assert with so much impudence.*" Schöler struggles with this man three afternoons. When Schöler states that at no time did he admit his guilt, although the lieutenant, to clear himself, has claimed that he did, the captain breaks into a passion. "How can a private have the unheard-of impudence to state that his lieutenant was wrong, and that his lieutenant's official report contains such a mistake?" After a long discussion, Schöler refusing to alter his statement, the officer writes it down.

It is to be remarked that so far Schöler has never had access to the papers in his case; his persecutors never had, and do not have, to communicate the evidence they have taken. And when the imperial decision arrives, they communicate to him only the lines containing the following words at the end of the document: "The complaint of Private Schöler is rejected, as he has not established that his action was the result of an accident. But grace is granted hereby dispensing him from a new penalty."

"As a *faithful subject* and an *ex-soldier* of his majesty," says Schöler, "I must refrain from criticising such a

sentence. I can only say that I felt sorry not to be able to appeal to a higher authority. I had not asked for "grace," and would have accepted without flinching an increased penalty. I do not believe that any one of my readers doubts of my innocence, and it might interest the nation to know who advised the emperor when he signed this document. Although it may not be very convenient to inquire about it, would it not perhaps interest the German people to know who are the state functionaries, so far-famed for their loyalty, who lay such a paper before the emperor to be signed by him."

This was only the beginning of Schöler's persecutions. A few days later, on one of the hottest days of July, Schöler is ordered "specially" to repeat certain drill exercises between one and two o'clock in the sun. With him are a few other "bad fellows," and this is a measure inflicted by the captain. This man orders Schöler to pack sixteen pounds of sand in his sack, and orders "running exercises." The order is repeated till Schöler's head begins to whirl, and he falls inanimate on the ground. In his fall he grabs the coat of a comrade. They carry him senseless to the hospital. The doctor orders him to bed, and says, "It is nothing." On the next day Schöler is on his legs again, and he is notified that the captain has reported him for disobedience, and that a court-martial is summoned to try him.

"I felt very uneasy," says Schöler, "for I had excellent reasons to mistrust the justice of Prussian military courts."

During the trial the military auditor states that "Schöler is a man who has shown by his insistence the most guilty obstinacy; that a man of his intelligence could have become a corporal long ago; that he has an iron constitution, and that consequently he could not

*faint.*" The sentence then reads as follows: "Private Schöler is sentenced to fourteen days of solitary confinement for having simulated sickness during drill exercises, thrown himself on the ground, and knowingly refused to perform his duty."

"I was wild," says Schöler, "when I returned to my room. The omnipotence of military authority appeared before me in appalling reality. I ran with my head against the wall. I understood then how Prussian militarism could kill a man or make him insane."

Schöler decided to appeal. The auditor, or prosecuting officer, summons him to appear and advises him not to. Naturally enough the Prussian state does not like to hear so much noise made about its crimes. Schöler persists; the state must show evidence that he was not really sick, but merely shamming. A new appeal? Here the Prussian state has an easy way to stop Schöler. He is detached from his company and sent to Magdeburg, to serve there as a military laborer—*Arbeitsoldat*; for there are in Germany certain companies of such soldiers, leading very much the same life as an ordinary convict, although they have committed no crimes, but merely shown by their general conduct that they are not in sympathy with the noble institutions of the German empire.

This stopped the appeal, and crushed Schöler, who, when his fourteen days are out (during which, of course, he again lives on bread and water), is transported to Magdeburg. The corporal who has contributed most to his misery comes to his cell, loads his gun before him, and marches him off to the railroad station. He is not allowed to say a word to anybody. How can such a measure be taken? The answer is easy. Schöler has been punished now so often that the men against whom



he makes complaints have the right to incorporate him in a military labor company. The very men against whom the law allows him to state his grievances are his only judges. They, who are the accused parties, have the right to make practically a convict of their accuser. This is German justice, with its long-winded, jesuitical regulations, which, under the plea of maintaining German superiority, German order, etc., hands over a man tied up hand and foot to any superior whose stupidity or mistakes he reveals. All the proceedings against him are secret. This measure is general in Germany, even for civilians arrested by the state for ordinary crimes. Schöler is arrested and imprisoned indefinitely by superior authority without being able to defend himself; what the accusation is based upon, what witnesses have said, what evidence has been brought up against or for him, neither he nor any man arrested in Germany, be he civilian or soldier, has any right to know. He is completely at the mercy of petty bureaucratic despots, just as his forefathers were in the eighteenth century when German brutality, hidden under a superficial varnish of German culture, was supreme in all the different kingdoms or dukedoms of the empire.

Thus Schöler begins his convict's existence at Magdeburg. What he has to do there, how he is treated, what the words honor, self-respect, manhood, mean in Magdeburg for certain German officers, in our modern epoch, form a most interesting work. Unhappily space forbids us to relate all this sad story. When one closes Mr. Schöler's book, *My Military Trial*, a feeling of indignation and contempt, of disgust for all these products of German education cannot be suppressed. For it is the same old story as in the eighteenth century; the military and bureaucratic caste contains to-day the same

brutes, the same knaves, each one crouching before his superior, and treating his inferior like a dog; and the people submits as meekly as ever, except a few victims like Schöler, to all barbarities of their rulers, indifferent to insult and abuse.

Let us observe—and Schöler's adversaries, the functionaries of the German state, admitted the fact in court—that beating, kicking in the ribs, slapping the face, or knocking a German private on the head is not an exceptional occurrence. “It is the national custom in Germany to beat a recruit, unless he belongs to the privileged class of *Einjähriger*—the young men of good families who, having received a higher college education, and being destined mostly to become state functionaries and officers, are allowed to pass a certain examination which shortens by one year their service as privates. Observe that if the poor recruit resents the insult, and defends himself against a kick or a blow, he is immediately court-martialed and shot, or sentenced for life; but that the “superior” runs no risk, and knows this fact too—he is safe. He can kick and beat that defenceless German subject as much as he pleases, for the latter must not lift a finger. Observe that German honor is the stereotyped word in everybody's mouth in Germany, in every school, college, and state institute; that the present Emperor of Germany alludes to this extraordinary virtue of official Germany almost every week in his constant effusions of imperial eloquence. Observe what a stage of moral degradation a German functionary must have reached when he lifts his fist to a man who he knows will never strike back. How often he will do it on his German countryman! but how seldom he would try such methods on a boxing Anglo-Saxon amateur who might knock all his teeth out of place as a

protest against German manners. Observe what high standards of civilization can prevail in a state allowing such daily practices ! Imagine, finally, a national army composed of all the able-bodied citizens of an English-speaking country ; and functionaries appointed by the state slapping their faces and kicking them into obedience and "German discipline"! Has the reader sufficient imagination to see such a fanciful spectacle in the dim background of his "barbarous Anglo-American" mind ?

In discussing this subject with German officers of truly good education, as the writer has often done, one hears always the same excuse. "One-half of our recruits are stupid or lazy ; some of them are hardly more intelligent than an ox, though all have had a good state-school education. They may know how to read and write, but this does not cure stupidity, nor laziness. Now our non-commissioned officers are directly responsible to their superiors for the bad appearance or conduct of their men. The corporal exercises paternal authority over them, he provides their education, and looks after their comfort. Who can blame him if, when worn out by the stupidity or indolence of our recruits, he hits them in the face, or kicks them in the legs to 'straighten them up'? And, besides, all our recruits are used to it, and never object to this method. We know that the right of the recruit to complain of ill-treatment is an illusory right, a perfect farce ! We know that it exists only on paper for show and appearance. But what else can we do in Germany if our recruits cannot be drilled without such methods ?"

These, then, are the practical results of paternal German civilization, and education ! No possibility of getting men to perform the duties of German citizens with-

out slapping them in the face and kicking them in the legs! A beautiful result for the official leaders of the German fatherland, of which one hears very little in lyric effusions of German patriotism—a fact telling a fearful tale. How long will German emperors, like the present ruler, be able to point with pride to the wonderful results of German patriotism, German honor, German education obtained with paternal state machinery? How long before some enraged mob, assisted by national soldiers, will hang much-decorated German functionaries on German lamp-posts, with their military emblems of honor dangling on their heels? How long before history repeats itself again?

We have left Private Schöler at work with wheelbarrow and spade in the uniform of a laboring soldier. Here is one of the regulations to which he and all his comrades are submitted: "The superiors of a laboring private have the right to examine all the letters and postal packages addressed to the soldier, or sent out by him; and they shall decide whether such letters or parcels shall be forwarded or delivered."

Here is a German subject, or citizen, who, according to the state's own evidence, has always performed well his technical military duties, whose only crime is to have protested against the shameful conduct of state functionaries, and who is withdrawn from all intercourse with the world and left prostrate and gagged by the state at the feet of the very functionaries against whom he has a legal right to complain! Now these functionaries can deprive him for a year—the third year of his military service—of all communication with his family and his friends, of all moral consolation, of all material pecuniary help. He is dead to the world, like the prisoners of the Spanish Inquisition, whose methods Ger-



many now copies closely. He is cut off from the world by the state. And who is the state? One or two Prussian functionaries, perfect scoundrels; one of them is a captain who occasionally summons Schöler and lectures him on devotion to the emperor, submission to authority, and other such German doctrines; and then, as Schöler refuses to admit that he is guilty of any offence against the German state, this representative of German official culture—*Bildung*—inflicts upon him continual torture of mind and body. But others who lack Schöler's splendid fortitude are finally worn out by a hundred different kinds of tortures, and succumb to the temptation of breathing without suffering; by submitting to the German slave-driver, these men are allowed to receive letters and money, and to inquire about their families. They even get a glass of beer occasionally, or are allowed to smoke.

Can an American or an English reader picture to himself this refined German state inquisition, copied from Spain by modern Germany?

At last Schöler finishes his military career. His three years of service are ended, and he publishes his book. Apparently he is free; in reality the struggle goes on. The state being unable to kill him, thanks to his strong constitution, now tries to strangle his voice, for the man is a terrible adversary with his intelligence, his education, and his deadly accuracy in stating facts and deducing conclusions. The paternal state has found that out at last, as it might have done long ago were its functionaries more intelligent and less brutal. The German police seizes the work. Now, under the law, the possession alone of forbidden literature or printed matter is an offence against the German state. The author, Mr. Schöler, and his editor, the bookseller Robert Lutz,

of Stuttgart, are brought before the First Criminal Court at Hanover. The case is heard, witnesses being called on both sides. Here is a significant fact: the officers mentioned by Schöler in his publications cannot deny what their own military records prove, but they have free access to the presiding judge's private room in the court-house; there they can all chat and smoke cigars with the judges, for they are both, the officers and the judges, functionaries of the same paternal state which selects, rewards, dismisses, and pays them. They are bureaucratic brothers.\*

For instance, Schöler has accused one Captain Moll of having heaped so many punishments on the head of a weak-minded, half-idiotic soldier named Almstaedt, that the man became insane. His insanity is proved by witnesses; but Captain Moll had continued to persecute and torture this man, who claimed to be a king, a grand duke, etc., till finally the man had hanged himself in his cell. But Captain Moll and the president of the court continue their social chats in the latter's private room. Think of the honor of a judge who holds social chats with witnesses in his room?

But the judge knows what he is doing, for he is promoted by the state as soon as the trial is over to a better office in Halle. And Schöler is sentenced to eight months' imprisonment, and the editor to a fine of one thousand marks.

The judge's sentence is a characteristic document. He states that Schöler, according to evidence, certainly fulfilled well his technical duties as a soldier, but that his publications show a complete lack of respect for the

\* The same methods were brought to light in France during the Zola trial.

institutions and the functionaries of his country ; in one place he has called the emperor a simple superior, which expression might imply that the German emperor is simple-minded. It is true that Schöler denied this intention, but the word is an offence. "The sense of military order and subordination," says the judge, "is completely lacking in him. And, nevertheless, a warning word came recently from very highest authority (the emperor), proclaiming that it was our duty to hold high the military standard of the nation.\* If the emperor has spoken thus—he, the herald of the German nation—it is the duty of every German to assent to his doctrine. Unhappily these words seem to have had no effect on the accused."

The *Frankfort Journal*, one of the leading periodicals of Germany, commenting on this sensational trial, using great care to avoid prosecution, says : "Two of Schöler's captains declared in court that he was a good and conscientious soldier. Consequently it was absurd to say that he was opposed to military authority. The conflicts began only after Schöler became convinced that he was unjustly punished ; and his only opposition began when he used his right to complain of a superior, and when, having obtained no redress, he appealed to higher and higher authority."

The sentence of the editor is also a characteristic feature in the case. He printed and sold Schöler's publications, which ran through eight editions in very short time. The judge finds that the editor must evidently have approved Schöler's attacks on state institutions, else he would not have printed and sold them ; this

\* We translate the words literally, without pretending to explain their obscure meaning.

makes him a partner in Schöler's fault. For instance, in one place Schöler has called Captain Moll "my most Christian captain." "Evidently," says the judge, "the editor knew that this expression was ironical, and that consequently it was an insult against the honor of an officer. And by printing such an insult he is also guilty of having insulted a German officer."

Such is the perverted logic to which state omnipotence has led in Germany; such is the system by which under the new régime of the last few years the freedom of political opinion has been practically abolished. As such cases are generally of a trivial nature, and as the German press is completely under the supervision of the state, they do not attract in foreign lands the attention they really deserve; and as they have no other apparent result than the imprisonment of individuals unknown to fame, they are hardly reported outside of the narrow limits where these outrageous proceedings occur. But the very triviality of all these cases shows how constant, how general is the unhealthy pressure of the German state. Every day, at every hour, this crushing influence, applied by a vast army of agents, of military and civil officers of all kinds, is bending and deforming every mind, every intellect, and every conscience in the land.

We have seen what the barrack-life of a private soldier can be. Let us see what a German officer himself thinks of this system. Under the title *Brilliant Misery*, Mr. Rudolf Krafft, an officer himself before he was dismissed for having revealed the truth, has aroused all Germany's attention in a recent book. He was naturally prosecuted too for offence against the state, and the many editions of his books were seized. Speaking of the brutalities, kicks, etc., inflicted on the privates, he says: "Anybody who has followed the proceedings



of our military courts knows that these brutalities should be divided into two classes: those resulting from a fit of momentary passion, and those which consist of such tortures as often make the hair stand to hear of them. Both cases are frequent; but they are not so much the consequence of innate cruelty and inhumanity as the consequence of our whole system. All our army organization is based on an abnormal foundation, and just as a body impregnated with bad blood will show ulcers and abscesses, so is our army manifesting to-day ulcers which should be attributed not to the members but to the whole system. Let me give some practical illustrations from experiences of real life to show how our machine works.

“There is a great city in Germany which has many bridges, and there is a military regulation that no military salute shall be made on any of these bridges. Why this regulation exists it is impossible to tell; but it exists, and must be exactly followed. A private walks on the bridge and suddenly perceives his colonel; he pulls down his coat and stops, making a beautiful salute. To his great astonishment, the colonel jumps towards him and asks his name and company. Now begins the trouble. The colonel is furious; he rushes to the barracks and summons before him the captain of the company, and also the major.

“‘Why has Private X stopped and saluted on that bridge?’

“The only sensible answer would be, ‘Please ask him, for he knows more about it than we do.’ But of course such an answer is not allowed. Consequently the captain and the major have to stand there and be scolded like two school-boys, for they each have a wife and children to provide for, and the colonel is the man who,

whenever he pleases, can write a short note concerning the bad behavior of certain 'school-boys,' which note puts an officer immediately on the retired list. Consequently one has to stand very still, be very pleasant and nice, and suffer anything. When the colonel has finished, the major turns his horns on the captain to teach him a lesson. The captain, having now had two superiors at his throat, trembles in his boots, for a similar trouble may have happened once before to him, and he sees himself, in imagination, walking about town umbrella in hand and a stove-pipe hat on his head. Now, in order to put an end to such risks in future, our captain knows exactly what he has to do. He summons the corporal before him, and 'explodes on him' in such a way that the barrack-walls tremble. Perhaps he also puts him under 'confinement to barracks' to teach him his duty. Now Nemesis has reached our non-commissioned officer, the corporal, and he catches the private. And as in our military buildings insults and coarseness augment at the rate of the square of the distances between the degrees of rank, the corporal, howling with rage, falls upon the private, kicks him at once, and knocks him in the face with all the might of his fist, in order to 'teach the d—d hog how to behave.'"

Thus, to use the words of Taine quoted above, "the dimensions" of these four men have become wonderfully 'reduced' by state pressure, every one of them being at the mercy of his superior; he is beaten if he is a private, or if he is an officer, he sees his career broken and his bread and butter suddenly taken away from him. How the dimensions of a human being become reduced if he wears the uniform of a German officer, a glance at the system can tell us. What feudal nobility was formerly in Germany, the hierarchic functionaries of the

German state are to-day. They are divided into two great classes : the officers constituting the military caste, and the civil functionaries constituting the bureaucratic caste. Insubordination against the former, whatever the sufferings of the subordinate may be, means death or some punishment almost equal to it. Insubordination against the latter, manifested either by public criticisms, speeches, pamphlets, or conversations, means imprisonment or fine, or both together. This, because the German state could not exist a week without compulsory obedience to itself and consequently to its agents. If the individual were allowed to criticise his "superiors"—and everybody in Germany has "superiors" and "inferiors"—the whole fabric would fall to pieces, for it is not built on the principle of common interests, mutual concessions, and respect for individual rights, etc. It is built on the Jacobin doctrine so well described by Taine, the state having the power and the mission to trim down individual man to its foreordained pattern, "cut out with a pair of legislative scissors"; to repress all his thoughts and feelings if not conformable to the pattern, and substitute therefor artificial products of state education and training. To obtain such a result, to be able to cram every member of the nation into the state pattern, into the official frame, the German state requires two things : First, complete obedience of the individual, who must abandon all originality and enter into the state mould, there to receive his shape ; secondly, complete devotion to the state's interests on the part of its functionaries who have to do the trimming, the teaching, the educating, the inspecting, the scolding, the enforcing and compelling, the watching, the punishing, the rewarding, and the crushing.

Without complete submissiveness on one side, and

complete control on the other, the German state cannot live. Consequently any opposition, criticism, or blame expressed by the individual becomes an offence against the state; for the German mind cannot conceive a civilized state where this complete submissiveness on one side and this complete control on the other do not exist; and the more completely they exist, the better the state must be according to the German notion. How could a state exist where free criticisms can be made against its functionaries, where the government is not a school-master, and the citizens treated like children? Must not children be compelled to learn? Do not speak to him of the Anglo-Saxon doctrine of individual rights and liberties! Certainly England and the United States have much money and some power, but logically they should have none! Infallible German state logic can fully explain this American and English anomaly; everybody in Germany can explain it, except a few who call themselves liberals. The only reason why England and America have been able to get along so far without the German method is that England is an island inhabited by a nation of shopkeepers, which cannot be reached easily; and because the United States have a whole continent full of silver and gold, where, notwithstanding American mob-rule, denial of justice, lynch law, and such other manifestations of innate Anglo-Saxon brutality, people have been able to get along without a civilized government. But it will not last—official logic says so. England is in complete decadence already, and all her colonies will soon revolt against her tyrannical rule; and the United States are already fully demoralized by a corrupt government, offices there being bought and sold to the highest bidder by politicians and demagogues.



Thus by a very strange optical faculty peculiar to the German intellect, the state does not appear as a horizontal commonwealth (if I may use the expression), as it does to Anglo-Saxon eyes, but rather as a vertical hierarchical ladder. On top of this ladder is the king, who holds his power from above, like everybody on the ladder; he receives it from God, vertically so to speak, not from parliament or the people or other points of the horizon. Under the king, on the next round of the ladder, are the great functionaries, those who are entitled in Germany to be called "excellency," the ministers and officers above the rank of lieutenant-general, and such other dignitaries who hold their power from the king. On the third round of the ladder—counting always from the sky downward—come other functionaries. Then, step by step, you descend this bureaucratic ladder till you get to the "low people," not much higher above ground than overgrown children. Every man has superiors standing above him, except the king, or Kaiser, the head of the state, who settles accounts only with God; and every man has "inferiors," whom he can order about and command, except the lowest class, the peasant, the artisan, the common man whose functions in the state consist simply in being taught and governed, whose duties consist simply in prompt obedience as subject or soldier, and whose welfare is looked after by vertical authority. Under this class comes the cattle.

Such is the German social system, not a horizontal commonwealth, where every man contributes to the general cohesion and prosperity according to his natural weight, with central pivots, axes, and wheels on which the political body turns, with well-defined spheres of action for these political pivots and wheels; but a vertical organization in which man's political and social

activity consists in climbing on the ladder from one round to another. This is the German "ascent of life," or *Bildung*, the only one which can be seen, looking through German spectacles.

The English-American political clockwork in which the amount of friction between all the component parts is reduced to a minimum, where all the different pieces are kept in place, not by dint of brutal pressure, but by a clever juxtaposition of the wheels, allowing no piece to clash with its neighbor, and where the whole forms a complete system built for a practical, not a theoretical object, the conformity of the nation's time with sidereal and other natural laws regulating the universe—all this is an unnatural, almost scandalous performance in the eyes of "official" Germany. For the latter, vertical pressure from superior authority, paternal plumb-line, and energetic rectification of all activity not in conformity with this plumb-line, hierarchic state ladder, with its various official dignities and official rounds, leading Germans towards heaven, whence the head of the state derives political wisdom and paternal authority—these contrivances alone constitute a well-organized political and social system. Necessarily when the ladder becomes top-heavy, as it did after the death of Frederick the Great, the slightest shock of earthquake caused by volcanic fires, by fanatic democracy with its victorious generals, upsets the equilibrium, and a treaty of Basel must be signed; and when, later on, a Napoleonic whirlwind breaks out, vertical-ladder authority tumbles flat on the ground, and lies horizontally at last before the world. When, in 1848, under the weight of vertical pressure, the lower and even the middle steps of the ladder break, split the machine, and decline to submit any longer to the strain, cold steel can alone repair the

broken timbers. Bayonets and artillery can re-establish order for a while, but whether this state can keep plumb depends at all times upon the excellence of the men who are on top, upon their natural ability in maintaining the line plumb, upon the quickness of their eye, and their gymnastic or acrobatic skill.

By what sacrifices of manhood and dignity the plumb-line of the German system is kept up, a glance at the distorted figure of its dominating caste, the military, will show.

“The military cadet,” says Mr. Krafft,\* who was a cadet himself, “is not educated in Germany to become a man. He is only trained to be an officer. And when I say ‘officer,’ I mean it in the full sense of the word; for all the exalted notions of that caste’s importance are at once inoculated by the state into the mind of the cadet. The state repeats to him every day the old song of ‘the First Estate in the land.’ The military uniform does the rest, and from the early beginning of the cadet’s education you discern already in the little puppet-soldier, whose ears are generally more asinine than those of other boys of his age, the germs of the military overbearing temper. He speaks already of the civilians as ‘those scabby fellows’; he calls the private ‘that block-head,’ or ‘that cursed chap.’ The influence of parents is lacking, and the tone of bully which prevails in the whole institution impregnates him more and more. You do not notice it when the cadet is out of doors; on the streets he has elegant manners; but the wide chasm which separates the officer’s caste from the civilian population, even here in Bavaria, has its origin, without any exaggeration, in the cadet schools. This is the root of

\* *Das glänzende Elend.* Stuttgart.

the evil, whatever our cabinet ministers may assert when they say that our officers are also members of the nation. There is only one solution : abolish our cadet schools."

The cadet has become an officer, now free to act as he pleases after having been confined day and night in his school under stern discipline. These very men whom he could not approach before will now accept even the invitation to drink a bottle of champagne. There is only one trouble, a very general one in Germany : if he is not assisted by rich parents, how can he afford to live with a small pay among all the exigencies of his new station in life ? Temptations surround him ; as Mr. Krafft says, the Jew money-lenders, women, gambling, and drinking absorb all his attention, for his profession requires from him small intellectual effort.

"The sinking of the intellectual level of our officers as a class," says the author, "during the last ten years, is a notorious fact in Germany, which none of us can conceal. There were, formerly, for instance, some distinguished scientific and literary men among the officers in Würtemberg ; where do we find any to-day ? . . . When a lieutenant leaves the gates of the barracks, he has really not one thought in his head. As a recreation he can only seek pretty women, gamble, or drink. It is not the wearing of a uniform, but his bad education and his mind-killing profession that produce this result ; and the evidence of it is the fact that military doctors as a rule are much less addicted to such pastimes ; for they have to work with their brains, not only with their legs. If anybody believes that my statement is exaggerated let him go to the tavern and listen to the conversations at each table. After he has heard the different groups of lawyers, doctors, and professors who sit there by them-



selves, let him listen to the talk at the tables of the officers."

The pay of a lieutenant of infantry is seventy-five marks a month (not quite twenty dollars); and he receives besides, according to the town where he is located, a small indemnity, which, according to Mr. Krafft's elaborate calculations, sometimes doubles this sum; but the total does not even cover expenses for bare necessities of life. Unless his parents support him, he becomes inevitably the prey of the Jew money-lender, who is always ready to trust him, provided the paper is endorsed by another officer; and then he has no other resource but to marry a girl with money, not because he likes her, but because she possesses a dowry sufficient for his needs. The state regulates beforehand the conditions of the marriage; for the lieutenant cannot marry unless the girl has given evidence to the state that she possesses an income of two thousand five hundred marks (about six hundred dollars), representing in Germany a capital of seventy thousand marks, or eighteen thousand dollars.

"A girl whose father can afford to part with such a sum for one of his children," says Mr. Krafft, "is not as a rule a girl who has learned how to work, for she did not need it. 'Scratch the Russian and you find a Tartar' is a proverb which we can apply to nearly all our well-to-do families. Dresses, much appearance, some French conversation, and the performance on a piano of some hackneyed pieces cannot conceal the real ignorance resulting from our fashionable female school education. Dancing, concerts, theatres, sea-shore recreations, and flirting are the only popular performances in that class; and as our officers are notoriously fond of such recreations, every girl in Germany wishes to marry a lieutenant."

“Every man in our military organization,” says Mr. Krafft, “is at the complete mercy of his superior ; he is not a man any more, but a worthless puppet. The right to appeal from a superior’s decision is equal to zero. Every superior takes the position of an absolute monarch, and it is sometimes much more difficult to live under him than to live in a Siberian colony under ‘the Russian Father.’ The regulations relating to the right of complaint are of such a nature that a glance at them shows their worthlessness ; but it is especially in relation to his means of existence that an officer is at the complete mercy of his superior. There is no question of ‘right’ here ; for the matter is very summarily and arbitrarily disposed of by these words: ‘Shut your mouth, or retire and be pensioned off.’ Military men in Germany know that my criticisms, bitter as they are, are true.

“From 1884 to 1891, I have had six different captains, and every one of them has been retired and pensioned off. During that time I have had nine majors, and of these only one is serving now—the least intelligent of them all according to my own and to other people’s opinion. One of them is doing good service elsewhere than in our army ; but the other seven can be seen walking about and trying to live on their pensions, although they are as healthy as can be. Just as the lieutenant frets for want of cash to pay for necessaries of life, so are the other officers worried to death because they are in the position towards their superiors of a beggar asking for bread. The ‘friendly’ note which the officer receives—the ‘blue letter’ as we call it in the service—notifies him that a change in his post is contemplated, ‘but that if he chooses he can ask to be relieved from further duties.’ Now just think how this

note affects him. The officer is generally a major, forty or fifty years old; his children are receiving their most important education, and he is making pecuniary sacrifices to that end. Now the state appears and dismisses this man, who perhaps has been wounded in its service; it puts him out of doors. Whoever has seen the tears which these 'blue letters' cause, the bitterness, nay, the hatred, which are the result, knows what danger Germany runs with its new favorite principle of 'rejuvenating the army.'

"And here is another foul spot in our 'First Estate.' As we said, the inferior is at the mercy of his superiors, tied up hand and foot, and the latter can do with him what they please because the right of complaint is a mere humbug, and because anybody can be discharged and pensioned off for no reason whatever. This notorious fact has serious consequences. The anxiety to keep your situation and the feeling that you are at the mercy of a single man produce phenomena which greatly resemble lying, and which do not agree much with our famous standard of *honor*. And besides, under such despotic methods, manhood deteriorates more and more. Just as the lieutenant lowers himself often before his creditors, so the superior officers and all staff officers must continually sacrifice their dignity in order to climb a step higher."

Thus manhood, self-respect, honor, are being "trimmed down" by the paternal state in modern Germany to suit its "official" standards and regulations; and thus the official "plumb-line" departs more and more from the perpendicular of nature. Not only does that "First Estate" lose gradually its manhood, but the nation has to pay heavy taxes to support pensioned able-bodied men who are anxious to work, but who, having devoted the

best part of life to learn their profession, are unable when once out of German barracks to make themselves useful to the community. Every German city is full of these idlers, of these outcasts, of these "retired" officers, whose education has been such that as a rule they could not earn a dollar a day if they had to work for a living ; and the German nation has to support them, because the major's wife could not perhaps agree with the colonel's wife, because the captain could not make a sufficient display at the garrison, because the superior was conceited or jealous, an idiot or a knave. To uphold such a system, which allows a human being to control absolutely the happiness, the activity, the career, and the honor of a fellow-being, is a heavier task than any state has ever been able to perform in past history. Whither the system leads is easy to see by watching the growing discontent. To uphold it in order to maintain a national political existence is, to use a vulgar expression, "playing a game which is not worth the candle." Hence the democratic socialistic success.

"Our representatives in parliament," says Mr. Krafft, "affirm that there is a chasm between the officer caste and the people ; the government denies this, of course ; it is part of its business ; but nevertheless the necessary, unavoidable consequence of our system is that the state impregnates its officers with doctrines which are diametrically opposed to the feelings of our people. What is understood by our caste prejudices consists generally of such useless, ludicrous notions that it is my duty to refer to them here. What does our state understand by its 'First Estate' ? Can such a thing exist in a civilized country ? The men who break stones for a living are in their humble way a hundred times more useful to society than our lazy, uniformed German noblemen, who spend



their days or nights in stupid parades, in drinking champagne, in gambling, or in dissipation. And even admitting that such an unreasonable and dangerous division should be made as that between our 'educated' and our 'non-educated' class, is it not a fact that our officers to-day, to judge from their education, are the very people who should not occupy the first position; for our professors, doctors, and lawyers have learned more. I know that there are exceptions, and that college learning does not necessarily produce intelligence; but is it not a fact with us in Germany that the great mass of our officers, as I have shown in preceding chapters, stands much below other classes in real education? And what does the state mean now with its regulations of 'marriage in conformity with the requirements of classes'? Who are the girls whom officers cannot marry? In the first place, all the daughters of men who work with their hands. The daughter of an artisan!—Shameful! She may be as honorable and well educated as you like!—Never! But the daughter of a well-to-do speculator or manufacturer, yes! Why? Simply because the latter has money, and the more money she has the higher she stands, whatever the origin of this money may be."

We refrain from quoting more instances mentioned by Mr. Krafft for fear of tiring the reader. Those interested in watching more closely other grave results of this law prohibiting officers from marrying girls without a dowry can find in his work, *Brilliant Misery*, all the information they need. Some of the results can be surmised; for naturally the state thus puts a premium on vice. We have now to examine another disastrous result of German official civilization, more barbarous, if not more degrading.

"Another peculiarity of our system," says Mr. Krafft,

“which is contrary to national feelings, is the state regulation compelling a man to fight a duel. I will not discuss the propriety of allowing young men to fight or not to fight. But I say that there is no question about the impropriety for a married man to engage in such performances ; for the man who has a wife and children has more sacred duties to fulfil than to expose his life frivolously. But here again the spirit of caste of our officers interferes, with its usual contempt for all rules of true duty and true morality. Either the officer shall fight, or else the state pensions him off, and his career is broken. If anybody can see what honor has to do with such a regulation, he is more clear-sighted than I am ; for I cannot see it. It seems to me that honor and morality should always agree, and nobody can assert the contrary. I would even say that honor springs from morality. But now in our officers’ caste common vulgar morality and their artificial gingerbread conception of honor are often diametrically opposed to each other.”

And now the German state, in its solicitude for the nation’s welfare, imposes class legislation by instituting what it calls its court of honor. This is a powerful institution, as we shall see, for it affects the standing in the community of all people who, in the course of regular military service, once wore on their backs an officer’s coat ; of all civilians who were not mere privates in younger days, who are retired from the army and engaged in more useful pursuits—an institution whose decrees can be compared only to a similar one in the Catholic Church—excommunication. Both the Roman Catholic Church and the German state, working on the same principle of despotic authority, with the same aim, the pretended improvement of the people, are reaching the same re-

sults; they brand a man's reputation with their iron, and, unable to kill him physically, they declare him unworthy of his countrymen's affection and respect.

These courts overrule all the regular courts, and they are bound by no laws; for the law in Germany does not allow fighting, nor is it permitted to shoot at a man with the intention to kill him. But the German courts of honor—whatever the word “honor” means there—compel any man who wears an officer's coat, or who has ever worn one, to disobey the law; or they can brand him as an outcast if, after retiring to private life, he makes himself objectionable to the state, as happened to Mr. Krafft, for instance, the gentleman whom we have quoted above, who was debarred by a court of honor from keeping his officer's title because his criticisms were unbecoming a German officer.

“These courts,” says Krafft, “are the fetters by which all the rights of the officer are securely bound and tied up. A wink from above, and all that is white becomes black. Of course we have regulations about forbidden influence, but their practical application remains always a myth. And, finally, we see daily an institution sentencing men for refusing to do a thing forbidden by the laws, and these documents are signed by the head of the state and countersigned by his minister.

“First of all, these courts should have no power over a civilian, and should not be able to restrain him from expressing his opinions, or from acting as he chooses. Has not, for instance, an attorney lately been sentenced by a court of honor in Prussia because in a trial before the regular courts he had blamed the military authorities? These courts of honor should not have the authority to disgrace a man before the community simply because the name of the man is still inscribed on the

list of Landwehr, or reserve, officers long after he has ceased to wear a uniform."

At all times in Germany one can be brought before this extraordinary court, which acts in temporal affairs very much like the old inquisition and excommunicating tribunal. Its proceedings are secret, and when one emerges from them one stands branded as a "dishonorable" man: for if this court does not really "dishonor" a man, why keep up "courts of honor"? In a country like Germany, where the people never had sufficient sense to discriminate between the "title" and the "value" of a man, this public mark of punishment, this degradation inflicted by the state, regardless of laws and constitutional statutes, is necessarily not only dreaded, but a bar to success in a civilian's career; for innate German servility is here as always the foundation of the state's arbitrary power. Can a bank clerk, for instance, be promoted to the position of cashier after he has been degraded by a court of honor, and after having lost his former title of lieutenant in the reserves? A letter, a conversation in a tavern, a speech, or an article in a newspaper, is a sufficient reason for being made an outcast in modern Germany, if one has been bold enough to criticise or to blame. What is the use of a parliament to make laws—against fighting duels, for instance—if the state has all the necessary power to compel a man to violate them? That Mr. Krafft's criticisms were true has been illustrated on his own person, for he has been "degraded" by a court of honor for having told the truth.

Nothing illustrates better the state of political and social degradation to which German state methods have again gradually led German society than the well-known Kotze affair, which, even before the Tausch trial, revealed what the state was trying to conceal. As the



London *Times* expressed it during the winter of 1895-96, the Kotze scandal presents such incredible features of German civilization that it is difficult for an Englishman or an American to understand how such things can happen in a modern European state. For the benefit of American readers who are not familiar with these features, we will briefly review the facts.

During the last few years a great many of the German ladies occupying high positions at the court of William II. had been annoyed—as well as many gentlemen of that court—by anonymous letters, threatening disagreeable revelations or mysterious prosecutions, unless they behaved according to the anonymous advices. There were many of these letters, and they were evidently written by a person knowing intimately the emperor's, the court's, and everybody's affairs. They appeared to be all in the same handwriting; and the writer seemed to possess such extraordinary information—which always turned out afterwards to be correct—as only a man could possess who stood very near the top of the German social ladder. Over three hundred such letters had been written, as it turned out later on. One day a highly respectable young wife of an adjutant to the emperor was denounced to her husband, who, knowing the falsity of the anonymous charge, laid the letter before the emperor. The latter, much incensed at these disgraceful performances, tried vainly to investigate the matter. His efforts did not succeed—nor have they ever succeeded—in unravelling the mystery. The anonymous letters continued to arrive. One day one of the courtiers, having entered the reading-room of the most aristocratic club in Berlin, happened to find on the blotting-paper lying on one of the writing-desks traces of the familiar handwriting of the anonymous letters. The anonymous writer had evi-

dently been sitting and writing there, and he had left an imprint of a note on the blotting-paper. Who had been writing that day at that desk? The master of ceremonies of the court, a cavalry officer, one Baron von Kotze.

The discovered evidence was immediately laid before the emperor, who, without any regard for any human or constitutional rights of a "subject," without any trial, had the baron arrested at his house by an officer of the court, carried off to jail, and kept there for three months under secret, non-judiciary proceedings. The baron was now buried alive, with no communication with the outside world; but, strange to say, the letters continued to arrive, as if nothing had happened. Evidently Kotze could not be writing them, and this thought dawned on the imperial mind. The man who had vainly protested his innocence, and had vainly asked to be heard, was now allowed to appear as a prisoner before his master. He denied having ever written such notes, and expressed the conviction that a certain dignitary at court, who was his rival for promotion to the higher office of "grand" master of ceremonies, had blackened his character and misrepresented the matter. This man, being confronted with Kotze, challenged the latter; but Kotze refused the duel, claiming that his honor was too much at stake to be vindicated otherwise than by a trial before the courts; and he insisted upon proving his innocence and his adversary's guilt in such a trial.

Kotze was now released from the jail where he had been illegally confined by a caprice of the head of the state; but the gossip of the officer caste was against him. He was called before the court of honor of the regiment to which he was nominally attached, and sentenced to be degraded for having refused to fight. His enemies thus

crushed him ; for the emperor would not allow a public trial, where the depravity of the court would inevitably have appeared before the nation. Kotze had lost caste by this sentence.

One day, his enemies being much elated over their victory, one Baron von Schrader, another officer of the court, openly insulted and challenged Kotze ; the latter accepted the duel and shot him dead. This fact cooled somewhat the ardor of his persecutors ; but now they changed their tactics, and the state prosecuted Kotze for having fought this duel—a few months after sentencing him to degradation because he had refused to fight. He was sentenced to two years' incarceration in a fortress ; but after a while he was released from this second imprisonment, being pardoned by the head of the state.

It is difficult for an American reader to understand such a condition of affairs in a so-called "highly civilized community"; and in order to understand it, one is obliged to examine minutely the symptoms of the present German disease, the socialistic cancer, which is penetrating more and more into the flesh of the nation. The few illustrations, as they are, show that under its military uniform modern Germany, with its perverted notions of truly Christian, truly manly culture, has reached a condition which, notwithstanding all the improvements of our century, is in some respects much lower than the condition of its French rival. Apparently Germany has more order and a better administration ; in reality the abyss between the people and the state, the conflict between the owners of the national estate and their manager, the government, is more serious in Germany than in France, where governments have been overthrown so often.

One of the most scandalous manifestations of the

bureaucratic corruption was exhibited very recently in the two Tausch trials. They made a deep impression in Europe. As everybody knows, the German state keeps up what it calls its political police. The duty of this body consists in watching and gagging the press, in giving pecuniary rewards to some journals and persecuting others. There is an appropriation for it in the German budget. Bismarck's expression, "the reptile press," was an allusion to a number of newspapers which sell their support in Germany for a consideration. As the Tausch trials showed, the state is constantly bribing newspapers to suppress facts, to launch false news, to cheat the public. One Von Tausch, a functionary at the head of this institution, having falsified the despatches to the German press reporting the speech of the Czar at the dinner given by the German Emperor in Breslau in 1896, the foreign secretary, Von Marshall, was accused of having given Tausch the order to publish a false version of this speech. The question, like all these German conflicts, was very trivial in itself, but it resulted in two scandalous trials, in which the German state was publicly convicted of criminal practices. Tausch admitted, as did also other functionaries, that they often forged names, deceived, and lied in the exercise of their great functions; and he exculpated himself by showing that his practices had the sanction of the highest people in the empire. The leading political men had to appear as witnesses, and Tausch was acquitted.

The old French monarchy, with its corruption, had never made any claims to moral purity; it never posed as the incarnate representative of political and social excellence. But modern Germany, and especially "official Germany," presents to the world at the end of the nineteenth century the sickening spectacle of hypocritical



despotism. Its emperor, constantly brandishing his sword before the world, in military parades, reviews, banquets, commemorations of battles, etc., hardly ever opens his mouth without reminding his people that God inspires Germany and him. With all this sham religion constantly paraded before the public, he seems to have forgotten, like all Germany, that a nation which has replaced higher ideals by a sword is doomed to lose very soon its importance in the world.

The practical results of the more and more perverting measures adopted by the state during the last few years are apparent; for this very country, to which Europe owes a resurrection of caste prejudices and inquisitorial proceedings, of mediæval class distinctions based not on scattered rights and privileges, but on a centralized state despotism, is also the country to which we owe the nefarious doctrine of socialism, with its parallel doctrine of paternal state autocracy. For the more vertical the pressure exercised by the German state, the more the people react. Ten years ago the socialists had only a few seats in the German parliament; they had not many voters. Since then their number has increased by leaps and bounds; their partisans are increasing every day. Their fight is a bitter fight, a life-and-death struggle between official bureaucratic Germany, with its ludicrous standards of honor and culture, its absolute tyranny, and its growing corruption on one side, and the people on the other. The persecutions against their leaders, their writers, their editors, like all persecutions, only surround them with a halo of justice and right, which no political police can remove. Some of the leaders, like Liebknecht and others, when not sitting in parliament, are spending their lives in prison, convicted by mercenary judges, humble tools of the state. Every criticism, every

## MODERN GERMANY

allusion to a denial of justice, is immediately stopped. The social democratic party of Germany in 1871 had two representatives in the Reichstag; in 1884 it had twenty-four; it has now forty-three; and as, since the last election three years ago, the symptoms of bureaucratic corruption and misrule have ceased to be doubtful, it is generally conceded in Germany that this number will be considerably increased this year, when the new election takes place. The government has no majority in parliament; and were it not for the fact that the opposition is divided into several groups, all antagonistic to each other, and that the German people always attributes to the state the mission to solve all social questions, its authority would now already be seriously impaired. An unlucky war can at any time precipitate a crisis, as it has done in France. Such is the result of German state paternalism: social hatred and dissatisfaction among the people, and insecurity for the state; everybody expecting always from omnipotent managers virtues which nobody possesses.

### ADDENDUM

THESE pages were written before the German elections of June, 1898. The prediction made on page 223 has been fulfilled. The Socialists have increased considerably their number. They had 1,786,738 votes in 1893. The last returns increased this number to 2,125,000. In Prussia alone, the stronghold of the Hohenzollern dynasty, the increase has been about 200,000 voters. The number of Socialists in the Reichstag is now 57, instead of 43. It should really be 111, in proportion to the voting population. But the German repartition of electoral divisions is notably unfair; thus, the Conservatives, with 900,000 votes, occupy 60 seats; the Catholic ultramontane party (the *Centre*, as it is called) obtained 1,333,000 votes, and has 103 representatives in Parliament, where the Socialists, with their 2,125,000 voters, have, as already stated, only 57.

## CONCLUSION

THAT the people is the source of all political power in the United States nobody denies. But how much of this power should be delegated and transferred to a corporation—the most formidable and oppressive of all corporations in human history—this, my populist friend, is really the question! Whether the owner shall trust much to an ideal manager represented by functionaries working only for wages, is a point on which the above related European experiments may perhaps throw some light; a lurid light much dimmed by revolutionary smoke.

What the people requires theoretically from the state in its aspirations, and what it really receives, are two different quantities; and the greater the popular requirements made on the state, the more unsatisfactory the result. The greater, the more cumbersome, and the more complicated the machine, the more liable it is to get out of order; the more wonderful the various products you expect from your national machine, the smaller their value, the more worthless their quality becomes; the more additions you make to the machinery, the more crushing is its weight, the more impracticable its use; for the theory on which it is constructed is bad, being contrary to natural laws. Bureaucrats, functionaries, representatives of all kinds, do not possess more angelic

## CONCLUSION

virtues than the average man ; and what the people's authority becomes when delegated to them through the ideal channel of the state is what continental Europe has only too much demonstrated. To expect in the New World much benefit from an increase of state attributes, when this increase has been the ruin of nations that formerly stood at the head of Christian civilization, is to expect an impossible result. How much of its authority the people must delegate to its servants, is a question which, in the writer's humble opinion, should be answered with the greatest possible care ; for populism, state paternalism, and despotism are the three steps by which individual man, and consequently the nation composed of human units, reaches the volcanic region of anarchy.





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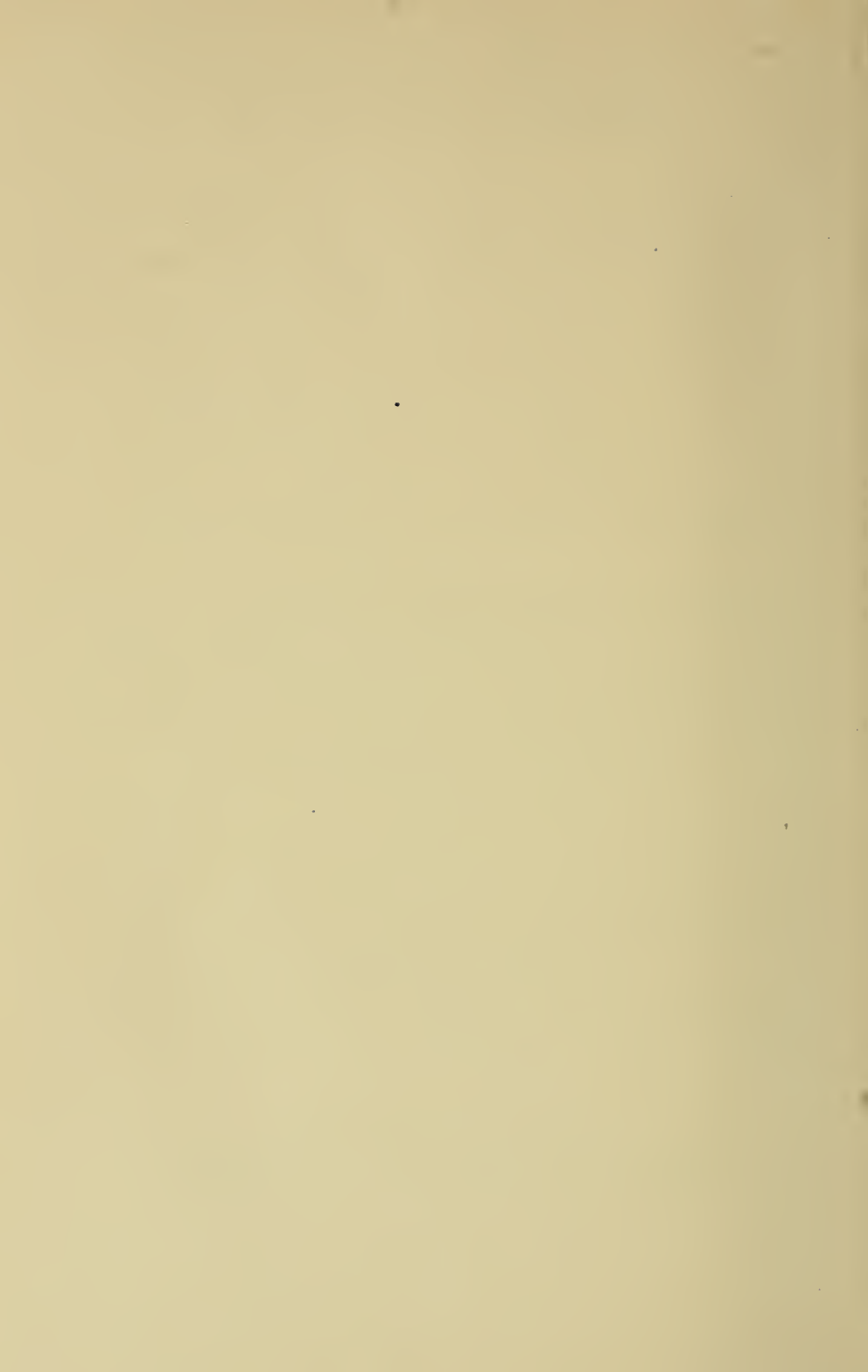
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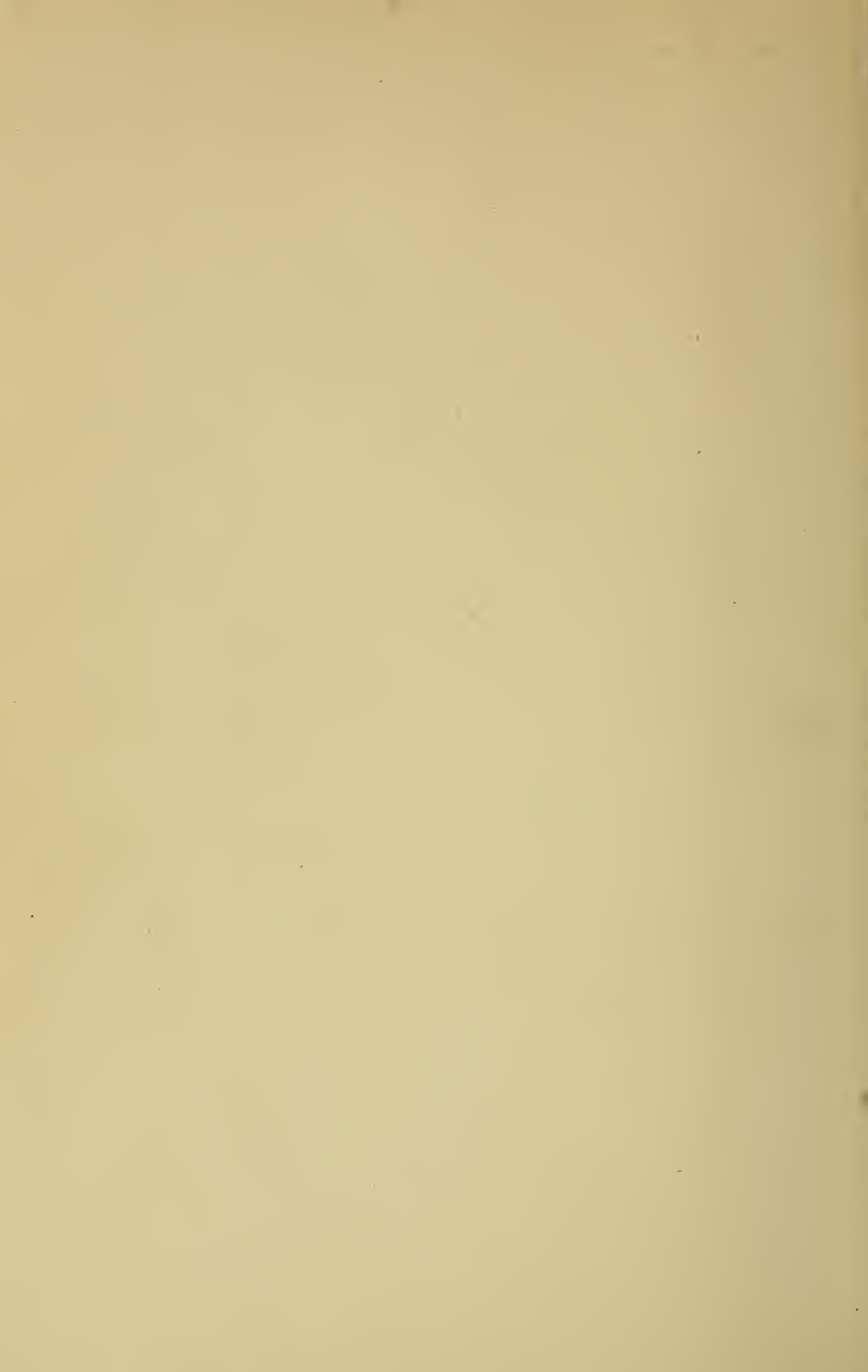
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